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# THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE ATHARVAṆIC RELIGION

BY

N. J. SHENDE

## INTRODUCTION

The study of the mythology of the AV is highly important for properly understanding the place of the AV in the Vedic literature. The popular religion of the AV is to be studied along with the sacrificial religion of the other Vedas, in order to get a complete picture of the Vedic religion. Attempt is made in the following pages to study the mythology of the AV, which forms the basis of the Atharvaṇic religion. The Vedic scholars, such as MACDONELL[1] and others, treat the myths of the RV most prominently in their works on the Vedic mythology and casually refer to the AV. But the Atharvaṇic literature consisting of the Saṁhitās of the two schools, viz. Śaunaka and Paippalāda, the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa and a number of the Upaniṣads[2] attached to the AV have their own religion and philosophy. The Atharvaṇic seers sponsored a particular ideology in their literature, which deserves our attention.

The religion of the AV, which is popular in its outlook is founded on a different basis altogether. It is the religion propounded by the eminent seers such as Atharvan, Aṅgiras, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha and others, who are also the respected sages in the RV. The Atharvans are the ancient priests of fire, propogating the religion of sacrifice, and are corresponding to the Atharvans of the Avesta.[3] The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa[4] informs that Bhṛgu, Atharvan and Aṅgiras were produced by Brahman, who practised penance. There were born ten Atharvans, ten Ātharvaṇas, ten Aṅgirasas and Āṅgirasas. The Veda thus sung by them was produced from penance and became superior to the other Vedas. The Veda got the names such as, Atharvāṅgiras Veda, Bhṛgvaṅgiras Veda, Brahma Veda and Atharva Veda. Its teaching is based on the appeal to the deities and supernatural powers residing in the objects in nature and receiving their power from the Atharvaṇic seers, who sought it by means of their penance and *brahmacarya* (practice of the *brahman*). These seers believed that the Ṛgvedic deities such as Indra, Agni, the Sun, the Moon, the waters, the Atharvaṇic deities such as plants, herbs,

[1] *Vedic Mythology*, p. 4.

[2] See my two papers on the Atharvaṇic Upaniṣads, *Prācyavāṇi*, Calcutta, Vol. I, Part 2, 1944, and part 3, 1945.

[3] BLOOMFIELD, *The Atharva Veda*, p. 9.

[4] 1. 1. 1-10.

amulets, ointments, the deities presiding over human feelings and emotions and good and bad spirits, contain tremendous power, which they claimed to receive in themselves, for the benefit of mankind. These sages practised their religion in the villages where the majority of the Aryan population resided. The region of their religious activity extended from the Himālaya mountain to the north, the Vindhya mountains to the south, the land of the five rivers (inclusive) to the west, and thick jungles and marshy lands of Bengal to the east.[1] The Atharvaṇic priests carried on their religious rites in the *sāntapana* or *gṛhya* fire, as distinguished from the Ṛgvedic rites performed in the three fires. The sacrificial rites of the Ṛgvedic religion were expensive and only the moneyed people could afford to perform them. Thus the *sūris* or patrons were the institutors of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice. The Ṛgvedic religious rites could not be expected to cure a man from jaundice, heart disease, *yakṣmā* or fever. The AV rites were primarily intended to celebrate the *gṛhya* rites, which later on developed into the various *saṁskāras*. The Atharvaṇic priests brought the sacrificial technique within the reach of the people by simplifying its procedure. They popularised the domestic rites. They attempted to fight with the various diseases, which attacked the Aryan settlers in the Indo-Gangetic plain and the marshy and jungle lands. They thus combined in themselves the office of a priest, a physician and a magician. They also evolved and popularised the worship of the *pitṛs*. Such was the new and social religion of the Ātharvaṇas. It was not absolutely new, but they made it appear to be new in the Brahmanised form. To support this new religion they evolved their mythology.

I have attempted here to investigate the Atharvaṇic myths on which their various magical, medicinal and sacrificial rites are based.

To get purely the Atharvaṇic conception of the deities, it is necessary to separate that portion of the AV, which is in common with the RV, from the main bulk of the AV. About one-seventh of the AV is in common with the RV. The 20th book of the AV, except the Kuntāqa hymns is found in the RV. I have mainly taken into consideration that portion of the AV, which is purely Atharvaṇic. With these limitations I have examined and grouped the various deities in the AV. This procedure is intended to avoid repetitions and it is expected to enable one to catch hold of the exclusively Atharvaṇic mythology. The body of such myths become the foundations on which the religion of the Ātharvaṇas is based and which is the subject of my further studies.

While examining the nature of the Atharvaṇic deities one is struck by the deification and attribution of mysterious power to plants and herbs. The plants are the deities, or the deities reside

[1] Cf. A. C. Das, *Rigvedic Culture*, Calcutta, 1925, p. 28.

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in the plants. The plants have magical and medicinal qualities. In the ninth section I have treated such plants. In the beginning of the section I have given their general characteristics. They are of different forms and colour. They have Soma as their king. They are the food of immortality. They belong to all gods. They themselves are the deities. They are intelligent and capable of understanding the spells of the Atharvaṇic priests. They possess immense power. They are useful for both magical and medicinal purposes. There is a very thin dividing line between magical and medicinal plants. I have attempted to trace the medicinal qualities of the herbs in the AV to those, which are treated in the Āyurveda, the system of Indian Medicine. In a dictionary of Āyurveda, called *Vaidyaka Śabda Sindhu* by Umeśacandra Gupta, the names of the plants are given with all their synonyms, qualities and employment, with suitable quotations from the standard works on Materia Medica of the Āyurveda. I have also consulted the works like *Dhanvantari Nighaṇṭu*, *Rāja nighaṇṭu* and others. I have also consulted a standard work with Marathi commentary on materia medica of Āyurveda, the *Bhāvaprakāśa*. On consulting these various works on Indian system of Medicine, I found that in a number of cases the qualities and uses of the plants and herbs, treated in the AV, to cure various diseases, are borne out by the system of Indian Medicine. Another important thing to note in this case is that whether the plant is medicinally useful or not, it is always employed with the spells of the AV, which are administered by the priest who is also a doctor. The main object in the treatment of the diseases with the help of the plants and herbs accompanied by the Atharvaṇic spells is to enable the patient to live happily for full course of hundred years. This aspect of the Atharvaṇic mythology forms a very important part of the Atharvaṇic religion. The plants are related to the deities, from whom they derive their medicinal qualities. Sometimes the knowledge of medicine is derived from the Asuras, or their women, who attempt to conceal the plants or cures under the ground. The Atharvaṇic priests knew the geneologies and families of the plants. By this knowledge the priestly Atharvaṇic doctor claimed to subdue the power of the plants and use it for curing the diseases. *Kuṣṭha* is a very important sovereign remedy against various diseases. It is the Atharvaṇic counterpart of the Ṛgvedic Soma. Sometimes the qualities of the plants are suggested by their names. The plant *apāmārga* has the qualities expressed by the root, *apamṛja*, in the word. *Vrīhi* and *Yava* are used in a cure against phthisis. The amulets prepared from trees, metals and pearl-shells are divine objects and are capable of yielding success, long life and valour to the wearer. In the plants which are used magically in preparing amulets, there is practically no medicinal quality. They are all holy trees, whose help is sought by their representatives, the beads or

amulets, made out of them. Along with the plants and herbs used magically and medicinally there are various diseases such *yakṣma*, *kāsa*, *balāsa*, *takman* and others, which are invoked as deities to save the life of the suffering person and are asked to attack any one outside the pale of the Aryan land. The plant *kuṣṭha* is the sovereign remedy against fever of any type. It formerly grew in the Himālaya mountain in the north and was developed in its numerous varieties in the eastern countries, which seem to be marshy and thick forest land of Bengal and further east. The sacrificial religion of the advancing Aryans did not seem to have deep hold on the people in this land, where fever of malarial and other deadly types and its consequent development in cough and phthisis were the dread of the people, along with other diseases such as jaundice, heart-diseases and others. The Atharvaṇic magical and medicinal remedies saved the life of the people in those countries. This aspect of the Atharvaṇic religion thus became popular there. Consequently myths about the plants, herbs and beads came in vogue. This seems to be *raison d'être* of the plant mythology in the AV. The Atharvaṇic priestly doctors believed that the diseases were caused by the sins committed by human beings and by the wrath of demons and evil spirits. The medicinal and holy plants removed sin and chased away the demons, who caused diseases and troubled pregnant women.

Along with the charms to remove worms and scrofulous swelling, there are in the AV many charms relating to the removal of poison of snake-bite. B. G. TILAK in his article on 'Chaldean and Indian Vedas'[1] contends that the *taimāta* referred to as a snake in serpent charm, is the primeval watery dragon *tiāmat*, generally represented as female, but sometimes as a male monster snake in the Chaldean Cosmogonic legends. Similarly *urugūlā*, also occurring as a snake in the AV, is *urugala* or *urugula* in the Akkadian language. It means the great nether world or the deity of the nether world. *Āligi* and *viligi* in the snake charms of the AV, may be similar to the Assyrian god called Bil and Bil-gi. TILAK argues further that the old religion of the Aryans was tampered with and hybrid hymns incorporating foreign magical incantations and formula were tried to be introduced in the Vedic literature. Only in the snake-charms there occur such words, whose meaning cannot be satisfactorily explained. It is possible that the words occurring in the snake charms might be belonging to the clans of people worshipping snake as a deity. Hence the sarpas are mentioned along with *devajanas*, *pitṛs* and *asuras*.[2] It is also possible that the Vedic Aryans might be practising the Atharvaṇic religion in their daily household matters even when they settled down in the Indo-Gangetic plain. The Vedic Aryans must not have borrowed this Atharvaṇic religion exclusively from the non-Aryan inhabitants in India, for the

[1] Cf. pp. 133-34. [2] Cf. AV 11. 9-10.

practice of witchcraft was quite common with the Atharvan priests in the Indo-Iranian period. Hence it is necessary to study in detail the popular myths of the Vedic Aryans. I intend to give here the Atharvaṇic conception of such deities. *Kṛtyā* is a form of magic. Naturally the Atharvaṇic poets pay homage to her and invoke her help. Kṛtyā is like a doll, having hands and feet, which are set up with joints and prepared by skilled artists. She is made to execute whatever task, the Atharvaṇic priest or any other person, expects her to do. The working of *kṛtyā* is not the monopoly of the priests alone. She can be worked by king, or Brāhmaṇa or Śudra or by any man or woman. If she meets more powerful counter-*kṛtyā*, she is halted and turned away. The Atharvaṇic priests claim to work out *kṛtyā* and counter-*kṛtyā*, as they possess charms superior to those of any other person.

Magical missiles used in the Aryan warfare such as *arbudi*, *nyarbudi*, *trisandhi* and *vajra* are invoked for help by the Atharvaṇic poets. These missiles must have been the traditional and hereditary possessions of the Atharvaṇic priests, who were the *purohitas* of the kings.[1] They must have invoked and employed them against the enemies of the kings under whose patronage they lived. In the Mahābhārata war we find the teachers in the Bhṛgvaṅgiras family possessed the magical missiles, which were traditionally handed down from father to his son or from teacher to his pupil. Thus the *astravidyā*, or the knowledge of the magical missiles, of Bharadvāja and Droṇa Āṅgirasas and Paraśurāma, the son of Jamadgni Bhārgava, as we notice in the Mbh. is the traditional knowledge preserved in the Bhṛgvaṅgiras family. Bhṛgus, Atharvans and Āṅgirasas had specialised themselves, of all Brāhmaṇas, in the knowledge of the magical missiles and priesthood at the court of the kings. The reason seems to be that they only had power to maintain the superiority of the Brāhmaṇas over other castes by means of their knowledge of magic and missiles and become successful against the assaults of some haughty Kṣtriyas, such as Vītahavyas, the Sṛñjayas, who were so much puffed up with pride that they almost thought themselves to be in the heaven (AV 5. 19. 1-2). These Kṣatriyas seem to have insulted the wives of the Brāhmaṇas, captured their cows and attacked the members of the Bhṛgu and Aṅgiras family. These Bhṛgvaṅgirasas championed the cause of the Brāhmaṇas and raised a cry of war against these haughty Kṣatriyas, who were ultimately defeated by them. Thus the Atharvaṇic poets raised the Brāhmaṇa, his cow and his wife to the status of deities, capable of destroying all outragers against them and prevented them from further defilement.

[1] It may be noted that a number of Kṣtriya kings took for themselves the name of their *purohitas*. Siddhārtha Buddha was called Aṅgiras by his father. See R. Fick on *Gotras*, ERE, VI, p. 353 ff., and Malalasekara, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, Vol. I, p. 20.

In the eighth section I have dealt with the minor deities in the AV. These deities are minor as compared with the major deities such as Agni, Indra and others. But they are highly important for understanding the Atharvaṇic conception of the deities. In this chapter I have also included the philosophical and abstract deities. At the outset I have given the general characteristics of the Devas. The Devas were firstly mortals, but subsequently rose to the dignity of the immortals. The moon, the lunar mansions, and the night are invoked as deities. Soma is identified with the moon. The lunar mansions are twenty-eight in number and begin with Kṛttikā. The eighth day in the dark half of the month is called *aṣṭakā* and the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Māgha is called *ekāṣṭakā* and was celebrated as the beginning of the new year. *Ekāṣṭakā* is the goddess, who gave birth to Indra. Śakadhūma (smoke of cow-dung) is the lord of the lunar mansions, and is the representation of the milky way. The Atharvaṇic priest is also a weather prophet, who gives out the weather forecast by looking at the line of smoke coming out of the burning cow-dung.

Kāma, like Smara, representing the sexual desire is the nucleus of the elaborate treatises on sexual matters, which are later on systematically presented in the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana. Skaṁbha, Puruṣa, Kāla and Kāma are represented as the highest creators of the Universe in whom everything abides. In the AV these different and independent creators assume the part of the highest Brahman of the Upaniṣads. Skaṁbha, Kāla and Kāma are the new deities of the AV. WINTERNITZ[1] does not find any substance in the philosophical hymns of the AV inspite of their sympathetic interpretations by Deussen. But the Atharvaṇic poets do not deserve such low estimate at the hands of the critics. We have to take into consideration the purpose behind their literary creation. They have a meaning to convey through their crude utterances. They were the propogandists of the first rank. They knew how by constant repetitions of the ideas, the public mind can be influenced. Thus they repeated one and the same idea in different ways. In all their philosophical conceptions Atharvan, the seer and god occupies an important place. He completes the creation of man by stitching together the openings in the head and urges breath and brain in the body of the man. The head of man thus completed by Atharvan is the divine treasure. The Atharvaṇic poets hold that the deities after all are their creations and are ruled by them. Skaṁbha has the eyes of the Aṅgirasas and the Atharva Veda is his mouth. Thus even in the creation of the highest deity the Atharvaṇic poets do not forget the greatness and superiority of themselves and their Veda over others. Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, is a god, a seer, one of the Pitṛs, a symbol of sacrificial priesthood and pastmaster in the technique of magic. Biṣkilā, Sūsā

[1] *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I, p. 155.

and Sūṣaṇā, the deities presiding over the child-birth are the new creations of the Atharvaṇic poets. The Gandharvas and Apsarasas are described in the manner of the Atharvaṇic poets. The Atharvaṇic poets carried on a vigorous propoganda for carrying on the study of the Vedas. They deified the Vedas, the Vedic metres, speech, the mother of the Vedas (Vedamātā), and the Atharva Veda itself. A student of the Vedas realising their mysterious magical significance is elevated to the dignity of the creator of the Universe. A student of the Vedas (*brahmacārin*), possessing in himself the mysterious power deserves to be so elevated. Homage is paid to the parts of the AV, and their seers. The Atharvaṇic poets had a very great regard for the power of the ancient sages (*ṛṣis*). Seven among these sages are described as makers of the creatures (*bhūtā!ṛts*). Of all these sages, Atharvan and Aṅgiras are the greatest. They had direct connection with Varuṇa and Indra with whom personally they conversed. These sages, prominently among whom were the members of the families of Atharvan, Aṅgiras, Bhṛgu and Vasiṣṭha and who were the authors of the AV, were responsible for the propogation of the Atharvaṇic religion and mythology. They harnessed the old Ṛgvedic deities for magical purposes and also created new ones to support their ideology. The Vedic religion of sacrifice was also changed in its details and outlook. The Ṛgvedic sacrifices having become more and more elaborate and expensive soon assumed the nature of public functions and were beyond the scope of an average man in the Vedic society. The Atharvaṇic priests simplified the whole ritual of sacrifice and introduced their *sava*-sacrifices which were less elaborate, less expensive and were manageable by single individual. They had the same fruit as the old Vedic sacrifices, which are mentioned to have found a place in the remnant of the cooked rice offered to the Brāhmaṇas in the *brahmaudanasava*. Along with the *savas*, they popularised and brought into prominence the Gṛhya rites, which assumed gradually the place of the main religious rites of the Aryans. Yajña and Homa are the deities possessed of unlimited overpowering power. Yajña is a weapon to overcome the enemies. It is *brahman*. Having given their due place to the Vedic sacrifices, and their Atharvaṇic counterpart, the *savas*, the Atharvaṇic poets also preached the symbolical and mental sacrifice. Even the hospitality shown to a guest is a sacrifice. All these revolutionary doctrines about sacrifice are treated in the tenth chapter.

The Atharvaṇic poets created new social deities, in keeping with their reformistic tendencies. The orthodox opinion against the Vrātyas, who were outside their fold, was changed by the new ideology of these teachers, which deified the Vrātya mendicants and admitted them into the old orthodox tradition. Respect shown to the Brahmacārin, who by the means of his *brahman*, surpasses all, is

merely due to the intention of these teachers to elevate the Brahmanic culture. The heretic tribes in the Magadha country and suspicious character of the Brāhmaṇas in that country suggest the fluid situation regarding the spread of Brahmanism there. The Atharvaṇic teachers took the lead in this matter and admitted such Vrātyas in the Aryan fold and deified their wandering mendicants. In the seventh section I have treated Vrātya, Atithi and Brahmacārin as the social deities of the Ātharvaṇas.

The Atharvaṇic poets can be said to be the influential promoters of the cult and worshippers of the *pitṛs*. They defined the residence of the *pitṛs* and their relation with the gods. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa[1] informs that beyond the third heaven is the extensive region called *brahmalokas* where the Ātharvaṇas and Āṅgirasas depart after completing their stay in this world. In the three heavens stay the performers of sacrificial rites according to the three Vedas. Aṅgiras and Atharvan were both gods and *pitṛs*, and Bhṛgu was one of the *pitṛs*. They distinguished between the paths of the gods and the *pitṛs* as *devayāna* and *pitṛyāna* respectively. Both go to the same extensive regions called the *svarga*, or the region of light. The Ātharvaṇas however go to the topmost region in the heaven. All these details are given in the fifth section.

The marriage of Sūryā, the daughter of Savitṛ with Aśvins is the subject of the fourteenth book of the AV. The pattern of the Atharvaṇic marriage called *saurya vivāha*, is modelled on the marriage of Sūryā. Almost all verses in this book can be rightly understood in their proper context, if we follow Kauśika. The magical significance attached to the details of the marriage rites have been specially described fully to get the proper understanding of the Atharvaṇic myths about marriage rites. The help, one gets from Kauśika, to appreciate fully the value of the Atharvaṇic myths is highly valuable. The foundations of the Atharvaṇic religion are based on such details of the magical rites. I have described the marriage of Sūryā and her other relations in the third section.

Among the solar deities, Rohita is the new Atharvaṇic creation. He is not merely the extension of the attribute of the Sun, as MACDONELL[2] supposes. These solar deities are described in the second chapter. Agni and Indra, who occupy a prominent place in the Atharvaṇic mythology, as in the Ṛgvedic mythology, are described in the first section, according to the conception of the Atharvaṇic poets.

The demons and spirits are described in the eleventh section. These demons are different from those found in the RV. The numerous demons who were the enemies of the Ṛgvedic Indra do not find place in the AV.[3] There is entirely another world of the

[1] 1. 5. 25. [2] See p. 115.
[3] Cf. S. V. KETKAR, *Jñānakośa*, Vol. II, pp. 258-61.

demons in the AV. They cause diseases, enter in the bodies of pregnant women and in general harass men, women and cattles. The Atharvaṇic priests are more than match to them. The Atharvaṇic seers, thus, take us to a different world of the deities, different in spirit from that of the RV.

## I

## AGNI AND INDRA

Agni and Indra are the very prominent deities in the AV. Both the deities also occupy a very prominent place in the mythology of the RV. In the AV they are invoked in the magical, medicinal and sacrificial rites. The Atharvaṇic priest enkindled Agni in his rites and recited his spells. On various occasions he saught Agni's help, and with the power of his spells made him yield to his desire. Agnis are of different types and have different functions to perform. Saṅkasuka, Mokra and Kravyād Agnis are very deadly. The importance of Agni in magical rites cannot be overestimated. Agni is the most popular deity in the religious system of the Ātharvaṇas. Indra retains his place in the AV as the god of the martial Aryans. The poets behave friendly with him and rely on his guidance and tactics in the warfare. Indra rules over the kingdom of the serpents too. The earth chose him and not Vṛtra as its lord. The conquest of Vṛtra by him is not so often referred to, in the AV, as it is done in the RV., although it forms one of his achievements. In the AV he has to perform a number of other functions suitable to his capacity as an Atharvaṇic god. The Atharvaṇic poets brought these two deities, just in the homes of the Aryans, and made them share in the different vicissitudes of their life.

## AGNI

Agni is a very important deity in the AV. The word Agni occurs nearly 650 times in the AV.

### (1) The births and general character of Agni

He is the son of the sages (4. 39. 9). He is the first-born son of *ṛta* (2. 1. 4). He is born of waters (12. 1. 19). Bhūmi bears him. She is clad in the fire. She is the cow and Agni is her calf (12. 1. 6, 4. 39. 2). The prominent field of his activity is the earth. But he belongs to the wide atmosphere, from where he sends down his heat (12. 1. 20). He is identified with the sun. He goes on burning between the heaven and the earth (10. 8. 39). All things on the earth exist on account of him. He is found everywhere. He permeates all objects living or otherwise. In fact, he is present wherever there is lustre or life visible or invisible. The AV speaks

of the various abodes of Agni. Agni resides in the waters of the sea (the submarine fire), in Vṛtra (cloud), in men, in stones (like the sun-gems), in plants, in herbs, in Soma, in cows, in birds, in wild beasts, in bipeds and quadrupeds (3. 21. 1-2, 19. 3. 1, 12. 1. 19). The Agnis move along the sky, the earth, the atmosphere and the lightning. They are within the quarters and wind (3. 21. 7). He goes in the same chariot with Indra. He belongs to all men. He eats all. He is called Kāma (Desire). He is the giver and receiver of all things. He is wise, mighty and encompassing. He bestows splendour. He is pleasant (3. 21. 3-6). His greatness reaches the heaven. His body enters the Fathers. His prosperity is spread among men (19. 3. 3).

Even though Agni is born, he is immortal (3. 12. 9). He has seven mouths (4. 39. 10). He protects men against imprecations (3. 39. 9). He is the lord of the east (12. 3. 55). He is described as *vaiśvānara* (belonging to all men), *jātavedas* (knowing all created things) and *draviṇodas* (giver of wealth). The counterpart of *vaiśvānara* is the sky which is formed by him by breaking apart the two firmaments (8. 9. 6). *Jātavedas* is invoked to come to the worshipper from the sky, earth, atmosphere, out of the forest trees, and herbs. His greatness is in waters, woods, herbs and cattles. These are his bodies (19. 3. 2). These different Agnis know each other perfectly well. There is perfect agreement among all these Agnis (12. 3. 50).

Agni is priesthood (15. 10. 9). He resides in Rudra (7. 87. 1). He is the weapon of Rudra (7. 87. 1). Rudra overwhelms the people by means of the lightning i.e. the fire from the heaven (11. 2. 26). Agni is the same as Rohita (13. 4. 5.)

## (2) Agni in the Sacrifice

Agni forms the very basis of sacrifice. As in the Ṛgvedic sacrifices, in the Atharvaṇic sacrifices too, Agni occupies the prominent place.[1]

*Ṛta* is the eternal law of sacrifice. Agni is the first-born son of *ṛta*. This explains the vital relation of Agni with the sacrifice. The sage Atharvan first offered the oblations in Agni. Atharvan is the first sacrificer. In the same manner the Ātharvaṇa sacrificers invoke Agni, who carries the oblations to the gods (2. 1. 4, 19. 4. 1). In a sacrifice Agni is sprinkled with ghee and increased with fuel. The crafty magicians sometimes prevailed over Agni and endangered his life. But the seers hope that Agni should not be damaged by them (19. 27. 5). The worshippers invoke him to take them across the dangers (19. 62. 63). He is harnessed by the *brahman* (spells) to

[1] For the details of the functions of Agni in the Atharvaṇic sacrifice see the section 9.

free a man from bondage and proclaim him as the best sacrificer among the deities (7. 78. 1). The sacrificer gets domain, splendour, wealth, progeny and life. With ghee Manu enkindled Agni whose brightness reaches the heaven (7. 82.).

Agni is offered the fuel of *vikaṅkata* with ghee to destroy the enemies (5. 8. 1). Some godless persons also attempt to perform a sacrifice, but Agni is prayed not to carry his offerings to the gods, who would not then come to his sacrifice (5. 8. 3).

With the help of Agni, the sacrificer attains to the world of the good. The *gārhapatya* Agni condoning all sins against the atmosphere, the earth, the sky, the father and the mother, leads the sacrificer to the world of the good, where the pious people revel, having abandoned their diseases and becoming perfect in their limbs, undamaged in the heaven (4. 11. 6). If a person is bound in the woods or by rope or on earth or by spell, the *gārhapatya* fire leads the sacrificer to the world of the pious (4. 14. 9). By offering a goat in the sacrifice the gods attained godhood. With Agni the sacrificer of goat, reaches the heaven, and is united with the gods. The sacrificers thus going to the world of light, extend the omnipotent sacrifice. Agni the eye of the gods and men, the first of the divinities goes ahead. The sacrificers go to the heaven in unison with Bhṛgu (4. 14. 5).

Agni is invoked in the morning while the Soma is being pressed (6. 47. 1). Agni the charioteer of the heaven is enkindled to heat the cauldron containing milk to be offered to Aśvins (7. 73. 1). The offering of milk thus made hot by Agni is potent to kill the enemies in the battle (8. 8. 17).

In the animal sacrifices Agni is expected to divert the attention of the victims from their sad thoughts (2. 34. 2). Agni is the chief priest. He knows the ways of the world and speaks of generations of the gods (2. 28. 2-3).

### (3) The different types of Agni

Agni gets various names according to his characteristics. *Jātavedas* Agni knows all. *Vaiśvānara* Agni is the friend of all. *Gārhapatya* Agni is the household fire. *Kravyād* Agni eats the flesh. *Saṅkasuka* Agni is the crushing and devouring Agni. *Mokra* Agni is the deadly fire and is in waters.

(i) *Kravyād and Gārhapatya Agni.* Ordinarily the non-flesh eating Agni is praised to eat one who hates the sacrificer (12. 2. 3). If per chance the flesh-eating Agni entered the cowstalls, he is expelled by offering of beans mixed with ghee (*māṣājya*) to the Agnis who reside in the waters (12. 2. 4). If Agni is set forth with fury when a man dies in the house he is again settled with suitable ceremony (12. 2. 5). *Kravyād* Agni, who is death incarnate, is taken out of a house with the help of *gārhapatya* Agni.

Otherwise he makes the people in the house fixed with thunderbolt (12. 2. 9). *Kravyād* Agni is sent to the world of the Fathers, where he should stay and should not return to the path of the gods (12. 2. 10). *Gārhapatya* and *Kravyād* Agni are separated from each other with a spell. The immortal ordinary Agni enters the hearts of the mortals. He is praised not to hate a person nor let the person hate him (12. 2. 33). A dead person leaves behind him the *gārhapatya* Agni and goes to the right with the flesh eating fire (12. 2. 34). *Kravyād* Agni, who is not taken along with the deceased, destroys the eldest son of the deceased (12. 2. 35). Whatever one ploughs, wins, or gains is lost from a person if *Kravyād* Agni is not removed from the house (12. 2. 36). The person becomes unfit for offering sacrifice. He loses all splendour and his offerings are not eaten by the deities. *Kravyād* Agni cuts him off from ploughing, cows and riches (12. 2. 37). Grāhi along with *Kravyād* Agni infests the house of the woman whose husband is dead. A wise priest alone removes the *Kravyād* Agni from the house. The non-*Kravyād* Agni is asked to remove the *Kravyād* Agni from the house (12. 2. 39. 42). *Gārhapatya* Agni is set against *Kravyād* Agni, for he conceals the gods and protects the men (12. 2. 44). Agni is praised to send away the dead ones to the world of the Fathers. *Gārhapatya* Agni burns the niggards and assigns to men a prosperous day (12. 2. 45). If *Kravyād* Agni scatters seeds after a person, he falls under the wrath of the gods and lives always in an evil way (12. 2. 50). The person who is chased by the flesh-eating fire, becomes mentally deranged (12. 2. 53). Offering of the withered cane, *tilapiñja* (the flowers of sesame) and *daṇḍa* reeds, removes the *Kravyād* Agni (12. 2. 53). He is also offered a black ewe. An amulet of lead is used to remove him. The ground beans are also offered to him. Then he goes to the thickets in the forest (12. 2. 54). Savitṛ, Indra, Bṛhaspati, Varuṇa, Mitra, and the Aṅgirasas are invoked to appease the *Kravyād* Agni, which eats flesh, injures men and brings about conflagration. This fire is damped with holy waters and extinguished (3. 21. 8-9). The *Kravyād* Agni is used to smite down the enemy, for he consumes the adversaries (13. 1. 29). The cow of a Brāhmaṇa becoming a *Kravyād* Agni, enters and devours the oppressors of the Brāhmaṇas (12. 5. 41).

(ii) *Saṅkasuka Agni*. This devouring Agni is enkindled to secure welfare. The fire removes evils and sins. He purifies all (12. 2. 11). This crushing, bursting, destroying and noiseless Agni removes *yakṣma* or consumption (12. 2. 14). The waters are invoked to cleanse any sin that is committed against *saṅkasuka* Agni (12. 2. 40).

(iii) *Mokra Agni*. This is the most destructive and dreaded form of Agni. It is the fire of the funeral pyre[1]. This fire possesses

[1] Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra II. 6. 10. SBE, XXIX, p. 313.

tremendous magical qualities. *Mokra*, the bull of the waters and celestial fire is released for destroying mind, rooting up, consuming, ruining the soul and body of a person against whom he is charged. The fire is let loose against him who hates the worshipper. When this fire is let loose in the waters, one becomes free from defilement, sin and evil-dreaming (16. 1).

### (4) Agni in the Pitṛmedha or funeral rite

Agni is offered oblations while the dead body is being made ready for cremation (18. 2. 27). The deceased person in the world of the departed, maintains on the offerings given to Agni in this world (18. 2. 30). The sacrifice offered in this world to Agni goes to Yama (18. 2. 32). Agni brings back to this world the Fathers who are buried, scattered and burnt[1] to enjoy oblations (18. 2. 34). Agni and Soma make roads for the deceased to go the heaven (18. 2. 5. 3). To the funeral sacrifice Atris, Aṅgirasas and Navagvas come and sit on the sacred grass, *bārhis* (18. 3. 20). Agni *Jātavedas*, with the offerings offered in the cremation rite, goes by the road used by the Fathers and accompanies the departed soul, in the journey to the other world. Along with the deceased also go the sacrificial cake, the ladles, and the implements of sacrifice, along the road travelled by the gods. The sacrificers go along this road (18. 4. 1-2). The cremated person is expected to secure the greatness of Agni as increased by the *brahman*. The eastern fire is the track of the Aṅgirasas, *gārhapatya* Agni is the track of Ādityas. The southern fire is the track of the sacrificial gifts (18. 4. 8). The eastern fire burns the dead, from the front. The householder's fire burn him from behind. The southern fire burn defence. Thus from the north, middle, atmosphere, from each quarter Agni protects the cremated person from what is terrible (18. 4. 9). Agni thus sets him collectively in the world of the well-doers (18. 4. 11). Agni is invoked to hold the cremated person completely and not to drop any portion of his body while taking him to the other world (18. 4. 12). In the last cremation sacrifice Agni is the Hotṛ, Bṛhaspati, the Adhvaryu and Indra, the Brahmā. This sacrifice goes to the place where is the ancient track of those who offered sacrifice (18. 4. 15). Agni is called *kavyavāhana*, the carrier of the offerings to the dead (18. 4. 71). The offering to Agni consists of cake, milk, curds, drops of water, flesh, food, honey sap and waters (18. 4. 16-24).

[1] These are the means of disposal of the dead. The Fathers are distinguished in the other world from each other by means of the way they were disposed of after being dead in this world.

## (5) Agni in the Battle Rites

Another important function of Agni in the AV is the part he plays in the battle rites. Sometimes alone and sometimes in the company of other gods he plays a vital part in the battle. The priests on both sides invoke Agni for getting success to their side in the battle. Agni and sacrifice are overpowering. A sacrificer becomes himself overpowering by offering oblations in Agni. He defeats the whole army (6.97.1). Agni conquers the fight in this way. The worshippers of Agni call him from the highest station. Agni being pleased with their prayers comes to them and carries them across all difficulties and sins (7. 63. 1). Agni points out that he has withstood all fighters and niggards (16. 9. 1). Thus he gains supremacy over all (11. 9. 25). Agni with Varuṇa and Vāyu assigns great royalty to his worshipper (3. 8. 1).

In the actual battle Agni is prayed to go round the enemies, and burn the imprecations and niggards. He confounds the enemies. He makes them handless (3. 1. 1). Wise Agni acts as a messenger and goes against the enemies (3. 1. 2). He is prayed to take away the eyes of the enemies so that the enemy would retreat (3. 1. 6).

In a rite for securing success in the battle Agni is enkindled by churning the *aśvattha* and *vadhaka* sticks. When the smoke comes out the enemy is frightened (8. 8. 1). An old rope is thrown in the fire. This flaming Agni is the fire required for the purpose of the battle rite. The fuel of various trees such as *aśvattha*, *khadira*, *tājatbhaṅga* (castor oil plant) is offered in Agni. By the offering of *aśvattha* fuel, the enemy is crushed, by *khadira*, he is devoured and by *tājatbhaṅga*, he is suddenly broken. The *vadhaka* plant slays the enemy with deadly weapons (8. 8. 3).[1] The enemy is broken like a reed and tied together with a great rope. The tracks of the hostile Agni are bestrewn with various symbolical objects such as fetters, nets and traps. The traps are of *aṣvattha*. The fetters are made up of hemp and *munja* grass smeared with *ingida*. The nets are made of hemp and the stakes are of *bandhaka* tree. The enemy is stupified physically and mentally. Their hands are cut off. Their eyes are blinded. The fire that is enkindled here for the magical purpose is capable of killing thousands. At the end of the rite the priest makes an offering to Agni with his right hand for the success of his friends and with the left hand for the defeat of his enemy (8. 8. 24). Agni is also prayed to tie the enemy with fetters which are thrown in the places, where the hostile army is expected to pass (6. 103, 104). Agni confounds the enemy and Indra kills each best warrior of the enemy (6. 67. 2). The heat, rage, gleam, burning and brilliancy of Agni is charged with the task of killing the haters (2. 19).

[1] *Kauśika* 16, and AV 8-8.

### (6) Agni against Demons and Evil Spirits

*Jātavedas* Agni is enkindled and yoked to the task of killing demons (1. 8. 4). He carries out the intention of the priest. He is asked to take cognizance of the act of the priest. Through him the priest obtains cows, horses and men (5. 29. 1). Agni is expected to do the work of the priest in accordance with the other gods. Any person, who works against the priest or whosoever devours him, is expected to lose all his support and to submit himself to Agni (5. 29. 3). When the support of the sorcerers is gone in this manner, they are left to the mercy of Agni. He then pierces his heart and tongue and destroys his teeth. Agni, the youngest god crushes back the *piśāca* or evil spirit which has attacked the pious priest (5. 29. 4). Agni brings back and restores the body, flesh or vital breath of a person, that is attacked by the *piśācas* (5. 29. 5). The *piśācas* eat raw flesh, hence they are also called *Kravyāds*. They injure a man by day or by night. Agni cures him (5. 29. 9). Agni thus kills the flesh eating and mind eating *piśācas*. The person then recouping his spirit and body becomes a strong man free from *yakṣma* (5. 29. 13). Agni is offered with the *samidhs* of *tṛṣṭagha* tree (5. 29. 5).

In a remedial rite against demons Agni is enkindled and is circumambuted three times and a cake is offered with ghee. The offering is made in the flames of Agni. Agni then burns the demons and spares the houses of the priest and worshipper (6. 32. 1).

The fourth Agni is called the *gṛhya* or the *Āṅgirasa* Agni who is distinguished from the sacrificial or battle Agni. He is the slayer of demons, who rise up on the night of the newmoon and devour creatures. Agni kills the Yātus (crafty magical demons) and the Yātudhānas (1. 16. 1). To protect oneself against the attacks of such demonical creatures an amulet of lead is used. This amulet is favoured by Agni (1. 16. 2). Agni burns against the demons and all malignant spirits with his dark-track (1. 28. 1-2).

Agni is prayed to bring to his priest, the sorcerer, the *kimidins*, who are forced to declare themselves and to speak out. *Jātavedas* Agni, the most exalted one, the self controller, is offered with ghee and sesame oil.[1] Agni blazing forth with these oblations makes the sorcerers and *kimidins* cry out. As soon as they present themselves before Agni, they declare themselves and are held fast by Agni. Agni is more powerful than the demonic creatures and those possessed of demons are warned about the superior might of a priest, who makes oblation to Agni, who is born for this purpose in fact. Agni, in turn, is controlled by the priest, who thus brings round and holds fast all demons (1. 7). A sorcerer may be a man or a woman, who arrested by Agni, is pierced by him (1. 8. 2). Agni knows the births of the demons and sorcerers. He also knows their

[1] The word *taula* is explained by Sāyaṇa as 'measured in sacrificial ladle'.

secret places. All this power of Agni is due to the *brahman* which increases him (1. 8. 4).

Agni *Vaiśvānara* is described as a bull and is possessed of real strength. He is praised to burn all those, who would abuse, harm or act like a niggard towards the priest of Agni (4. 36. 1). Such a person, who intentionally or unintentionally harasses the priest, is put in the two jaws of Agni. The priest on account of the help of Agni which he receives, overpowers all those flesh-eating ones who harm others (4. 36. 3). He takes their property and becomes successful against their designs (4. 36. 4). The priest possessed of such calibre due to Agni routs the *piśācas*, who simply vanish from the village he enters (4. 36. 7). Agni protects his priest, for none can excite him, on the penalty of being attacked by Nirṛti (4. 36. 10). In a magical rite of preparing water-thunderbolt, Agni is invoked to bestow the splendour of the heavenly waters on the priest (10. 5. 46).

Sometimes the Dasyus or barbarians enter the Fathers and come with the appearance of the relations along with the Fathers, putting on grass and subtle bodies. Agni blasts them away from the funeral sacrifice (18. 2. 28). Agni with his mighty missile pierces all undesirable creatures such as those who have the spells and roots of plants or herbs (5. 31. 12). Agni smites the demoness, who causes anxiety, regrets and imprecations (7. 114. 2).

### (7) Agni In Medicinal and Magical Rites

Agni has poison in himself (10. 4. 22). The serpents are born of Agni (10. 4. 23). Thus being the master of the serpents, he can bring out of the body of a human being, poison due to the biting of a serpent (10. 4. 26). Agni frees a man from insanity. An insane man is bound and is kept under restraint, crying loudly. Agni is prayed to relieve the insane person, of his madness. The man thus relieved of his madness is expected to offer oblations to Agni. If again his malady is revived, Agni quiets it down. The priest knowing the power of Agni removes the malady caused by any agency divine or demonic. Agni burns the faces of male or female worms in the body of a person (5. 23. 13). Sometimes *Kṛtyā* is buried in *gārhapatya* Agni by a rival priest. But due to the superior power of the counter-magical rite, this is averted (10. 1. 18). The *yakṣma* or Phthisis, caused by the demons or flesh-eaters in a body of a person is removed by Agni, who puts his life breathes together and thus cures him (3. 31. 6). In this rite for curing *yakṣma*, sacred fuel of reeds is offered to Agni, and as Agni blazes up *yakṣma* in a person or cows is cured (12. 2. 1). Lead is also used along with the reeds in the oblation to Agni. In a similar rite for curing *yakṣma*, Agni is offered ghee and an amulet of *varaṇa* tree is tied on the person. The healing power of the amulet of *varaṇa* is enhanced by Agni (6. 85. 1). Agni is praised by means of incantations to remove

the heriditary disease (*kṣetriya*), perdition, imprecations of female relations, hatred, the fetters of Varuṇa and from guilt, out of the patient, who is suffering from these (2. 10. 2).[1]

Agni is invoked in a rite for curing a person suffering from fever.[2] Agni enters and burns the waters, which is the highest place of fever (1. 25. 1).[3] For destroying a rival or enemy the dust on the track of the enemy is thrown in Agni, who then pervades the body of the enemy, which loses life shortly (2. 12. 8). Agni of the waters is actually the *darbha*, which is used in a charm for securing protection (19. 33. 1). Agni heats the triple amulet (*trivṛt*) made up of gold, silver and iron. Out of these three metals, gold is dearest to Agni (5. 28. 6). However Agni rescues the wearer of the amulet by means of iron in it (5. 28. 5). Agni sponsors the amulet made of *srāktya* tree. Agni assures that the amulet is capable of burning the back, forcibly removing the scorns of the rivals. It yields protection all round (8. 5. 4—5). Agni ties the amulet on the person for his safety (8. 5. 10). Agni and Indra present a formidable defence, which none can pierce through (8. 5. 19). *Jātavedas* Agni is invoked to revert back those, who make an offering from the front and thus obstruct the path of the sacrificer (4. 40). Gold is born of Agni and whosoever uses it enjoys good health and dies of old age only (19. 26. 1). Agni puts virile power in the generative organ of a man and makes it powerful (4. 4. 6). Agni's power is invoked to secure the benefit of *Udumbara* amulet (19. 31. 2). *Añjana* (ointment) is born of Agni. Agni is invoked to favour the uses of the ointment and to extend the life of the person by bringing about splendour, force, brilliancy and welfare (19. 45. 1).

### (8) Agni in Marriage Rite

Agni is invoked when the bride and the bridegroom go round the fire. As Agni grasped the right hand of this earth, his spouse, in the same way the bridegroom takes the right hand of the bride. The bride is asked not to stagger in the company of Agni (14. 1. 48). On the night of the wedding ceremony, the bride takes a seat in front of Agni and worships him, who slays all demons, who cause obstruction in the ceremony (14. 2. 23-24). The bride sitting by

[1] Cf. Kauśika 26. 1. This healing ceremony is performed at the cross-roads, while the chips of *kāmpāla* tree are bound on the joints of the patient and they or he is made wet with the bunches of grass.

[2] Kauśika 26. 25 lays down that an axe should be heated and dipped in water, which is given to the patient for drinking.

[3] Cf. Griffith on 1. 25. 1. According to him Agni, the god of fire descends in the form of lightning from the waters of the firmament and falls down in the form of rain in the waters of the earth. Fever begins to be prevalent at the time of the commencement of annual rain. Sāyaṇa while commenting on the verse remarks that Agni enters the waters through the heated axe. Also see Wise, *System of Hindu Medicine*, pp. 219-233.

the side of Agni becomes serviceable to the gods (14. 2. 25). Agni is invoked to expiate the sin caused by some evil spirits, and to free the bride from that sin (14. 2. 59-62). In the actual marriage rite,[1] the bride is taken round the fire of Aryaman (14. 1. 17).

### (9) Miscellaneous Uses of Agni

(1) A girl desires to secure a good husband for her. The wooer comes to her house. Agni makes the girl agreeable to the suitor. In order that she may have good fortune with her husband Agni is praised (2. 36. 1). (2) To win the love of her dear lover, a love-sick girl expects her lover to be crazy about her. So she prays Agni to make her lover mad after her and burn for her (6. 131. 4).[2] (3) To increase faith and wisdom in the sacrificer, Agni *jātavedas* is offered the *samids* (fuel). The blazing Agni is prayed to be propitious to the sacrificer, and to bestow long life and immortality on the Aryan sacrificer (19. 64. 1-4). Agni also instils that wisdom, which the sages, who create all beings know to be in a student of the *brahman* (6. 108. 4). (4) Agni is invoked for prolonging the life. Along with essence of the earth and the bodily strength of Bhaga, Agni prolongs life (2. 29. 1).[3] Agni being physician of the gods, cures all diseases (7. 55. 1). Agni being the best overruling guardian makes *prāṇa* and *apāna* of a suffering patient walk together without leaving his body and makes the patient live for hundred years in prosperity (7. 55. 2). Even when the vital breaths of the patient have left his body, Agni brings them back from Nirṛti (perdition) and make them re-enter in the body of the patient (7. 55. 3). Agni takes out *Yakṣma* from the body of the patient (7. 55. 6). In all dangerous illness Agni is kept ahead and prayed. So that the person becomes free from the calamity (5. 30. 11-12). He unites the ailing person with breath, sight, body and strength. For Agni knows immortality. He does not allow the patient to be interned in the earth after death (bhūmigṛha, 5. 30. 14). He is always ready to come to the help of his worshipper. He shapes the prayers of the Āṅgirasas, by which he bestows brightness and the heaven on them. (6. 36). Agni, the lord of light is prayed for securing unfailing heat. He rules over all, being himself the universal ruler (6. 36). In the rite of shaving a boy, Agni is invoked to lead the boy to the life time and splendour (2. 28. 5). (5) While piercing the *apacits* (*gaṇḍamālā*) Agni the lord of vows, is enkindled to bestow progeny on the person, who is in the course of time relieved of the *apacits* (7. 74. 4).

[1] For the details of the marriage rites and use of Agni therein see chapter 3.

[2] Kauśika 36. 13-14 lays down in this rite the scattering of beans (*māṣās*), burning arrow-tips and piercing an effigy of her lover.

[3] According to Kauśika 29. 7 in such rite the patient and a healthy person are made to sit back to back and are wrapped in one garment together. The disease of the patient is transferred to the healthy person.

(6) Agni for securing favours: A person in distress feels that all snares binding his body are loosened by the favour of Agni. Agni is here harnessed by the priest with his incantations (7. 79. 1-2). (7) Agni invoked for protection: Constantly Agni *jātavedas* is invoked to grant complete protection to the household of the singer (7. 84. 1). Agni with the Vasus is called on to protect the eastern direction. Agni defends the sacrificer from the malignant spirits (19. 17. 1, 18. 1). Agni in himself possess the quality of propitious protection (6. 3. 2). He protects a man from the earth (16. 4. 4). In the *godāna* rite Agni offers protection to the boy, as a father to his son (2. 13. 1). He belongs to *sabhā* (assembly) and protects its members (19. 55. 5). (8) For securing power, dominion, etc.: The sacrificer seizes Agni in himself along with domain, splendour and strength (7. 82. 2). For securing power in favour of some king, Agni is praised. He increases the person with whatever draughts, he (Agni) brought for Indra. He then sets him as superior to his fellowmen (1. 9. 3). As a result of this sacrifice offered by the priest, the king secures for himself splendour, abundance of wealth and the intentions of the rival. The king attains supremacy and rises to the highest firmament (1. 9. 4). Agni is the lord of treasure and bestows wealth on the sacrificer (7. 17. 4). *Gārhapatya* Agni is the lord of the cattles and grants the cattles to the sacrificer (19. 31. 2). The sacrificers are the neighbours of Agni and are favoured by him with abundance of wealth and food (19. 55. 1). The rich lord Agni is invoked to be gracious to the singer (19. 55. 2). (9) Agni for securing strength and splendour: Agni is praised to give splendour, brightness, glory, power, force, vigour, strength and heroic deeds which are thirty-three (19. 37. 1-2). Agni increases the man in whose house the priests enkindle Agni, with splendour abounding in progeny (6. 5. 1-3). The sacrificer wishes to be sweet and rich in milk, so he invokes Agni to unite him with splendour for the whole of his life (9. 1. 14-15). The whip of honey (*madhukaśā*) making all things sweet is born of Agni (9. 1. 10). Agni and Indra are invoked to make a person, who offers prayer possessed of splendour (9. 1. 12). The sacrificer thrives for a hundred winters by enkindling Agni, who is the lord of the house morning after morning and evening after evening and who gives good mind (19. 55. 2-3). (11) To free from distress or *aṁhas* (distress): There are a number of hymns in which Agni and other gods are invoked for freeing oneself from distress and difficulties (7. 63. 1). The hymn by Mṛgāra (4. 23) is in honour of Agni, who is praised to free him from distress. This seems to be the oldest of the hymns of the AV, in which Agni is praised in the manner of the RV. Agni belongs to the five clans of people and enters them one after another (4. 23. 1). By carrying sacrifice to the gods, he is asked to bring favour from these (4. 23. 2). With Agni as their friend, the seers shine themselves

brightly and repel the wiles of the Asuras (4. 23. 5). On account of Agni all gods become immortal (4. 23. 6). Whatever shines, is born and yet to be born, all that belongs to Agni, who is invoked to free the singer from *aṁhas* (distress) (4. 23. 7, 11. 6. 1).

(12) To bring rain: Agni with the waters became the overlord of the herbs. He wins rain, life and nectar from the sky (4. 15. 10).

(13) Agni and the heaven: Agni grants wisdom to the sacrificers, who with penance and vow go to the place where the knowers of the *brahman* go (19. 43. 1). Agni frees a person from bondage due to spells or due to some other reason and takes the freed man to the world of the pious (6. 121. 2). Agni enables a person to practise penance, and get success in his spiritual accomplishments (such as penance) by means of which he desires to be dear to the sacred learning (7. 61). He offers protection to his worshipper in his *brahman* (spell), rite, priesthood, stability, intentions, designs, benedictions and invocations of the gods (5. 24. 2).

(14) Agni digests food: Agni digests all food that one eats. This is the gastric fire. Agni as *hotṛ* makes all food, which may be of god, horse, cow, he-goat or sheep, well offered. Similarly Agni makes all food which may be given by the Fathers and consented by human beings, well offered. Similarly by the grace of *vaiśvānara* Agni, whatever food one eats unrighteously, intending to give or not to give to others, all that food becomes propitious and honeyed for him (6. 71.)

(15) In a rite for successful conception, Agni sets in the womb an embryo of the herbs, forest trees or of every existence (5. 25. 7).

(16) While putting on a new garment, which is a symbol of prosperity Agni is invoked to make the wearer, possessed of golden colour, unaging dying only in old age and having heroic children (19. 24. 8).

(17) To make the lunar mansions auspicious and bless the worshipper, Agni is invoked (19. 7. 2)[1]

(18) Agni and Kṣatriya: Agni is enkindled and is invoked not to kill the Kṣatriya. Agni thus enkindled arises with his tongue, out of the hearts of those who sit by the side piling up the fuel, with a view to see the Kṣatriya (6. 76. 3). The enemies do not kill him, nor do they know about him, when the Kṣatriya takes the name of Agni (6. 76. 4).

(19) To recover the lost articles: Agni brings back all things, hundreds or thousands, which are lost or misplaced (6. 77. 3).[2]

(20) To avert calamity on a child born on unlucky time: A child born on *jaiṣṭhaghi* and in the two unfasteners of Yama, possess

[1] WHITNEY on this verse, reads *me* for *agne*. Sāyaṇa reads *agne* which is probably right.

[2] According to Sāyaṇa the purpose of this verse is to make Agni retain a woman, who is running away.

all difficulties, but live long for hundred years through the favour of Agni. A child born on these two Nakṣatras (*jyeṣṭhā* and *mūla*) kills the elder brother or father. A child born on tiger day should also become a hero possessed of many heroes through the favour of Agni (6. 110).

(21) For successful trading: Agni forgives the offences of traders. He makes the sale and purchase of their commodities profitable. Their return from journey is also fruitful. They get success in going about on the roads (3. 15. 4). Agni is invoked with oblation to increase their capital and to put down the gods who cut down the gain (3. 15. 5. 6).

(22) Agni for success is gambling: Agni carries ghee to the Apsarasas and dust, gravel and water for the dice. Dice were dipped in ghee, dried in sawdust and washed with water. As a result of this offering of ghee to the Apsarasas, the gambler hopes to overthrow his opponents (7. 109. 2).

(23) To redeem oneself from debt: Whatever one eats, what is borrowed and is not returned, all that is made faultless by the favour of Agni. Agni loosens his fetters and redeems a person from the sin of eating what is borrowed without returning. All paths lead to the gods and the Fathers become guiltless for him (6. 117). If again one does not fulfil his pledge to return the debt, Agni averts all sin of that person and leads him to the world of the blessed. The same is the case with regard to the debt one owes to the deities. Agni makes good all that debt. (6. 118).

(24) Agni for expiation and mutual good-will: The quarrelling parties worship Agni to end their strife and declare their friendship by drinking and taking food together (3. 30. 6). Agni and Indra are invoked to unite the minds of the people, which are against the king (6. 94. 3). Any error committed or any forgetfulness in conduct is to be excused by Agni (7. 106. 1). If a drop of water falls from the sky, it is an ill-omen. Agni is invoked to avert the sin that might be committed by that person and to unite him with the deeds of the pious (6. 124. 1). Agni is invoked to cut off the snares of the father, the mother and the son. He is asked not to slay the oldest and protect him from disaster. Also he is called upon to avert the sin committed in performing the marriage of younger brother before the elder (6. 112).

## INDRA

The word occurs about 450 times in the AV excluding the 20th book. Out of a number of hymns addressed to Indra, the hymn of Mṛgāra (4. 24), describes Indra in the manner of the RV. He, the killer of Vṛtra goes to the call of the pious worshipper (4. 24. 1). He, the bull, fills the people and finds out the heaven. The intoxicating sacrifice, having seven priests is offered to him and the stones

pressing the Soma declare his manliness (4. 24. 3). The Vaśā cows, bulls and oxen belong to him (4. 24. 4). He raised up his thunderbolt for killing the dragon (4. 24. 6). Men possessed of arrows invoke him for securing cattles. On him the songs and prayers of the poets depend (4. 24. 1, 5).

Indra is the king of the gods. He is the conqueror of the enemies, the overlord among other kings, famous, and praiseworthy and ambitious (6. 98. 1). Where the streams go, that is his conquest. He is the king of the east, north, and south (6. 98. 2-3, 3. 27. 2).

He is identified with the Sun. The seventeenth book of the AV is devoted to his praise. He is the overcomer of the enemies (*viṣāsahi*). He is of mighty power (17. 1. 1). He, the sun, is invoked to rise with splendour on the worshipper (17. 1. 6). When he rises he drives off the imprecations of the rivals against himself, who is undamaged in the waters of the sea (17. 1. 8), in the heaven and on the earth (17. 1. 12). His heat drives off all imprecations in good weather (17. 1. 17). The sages increasing him with the *brahman* (spells) indulge in the sacrificial sessions (17. 1. 14). Indra, like Viṣṇu is brilliant, and is *virāj*, *svarāj* and *saṁrāj* (the great ruler, self-ruler and universal ruler. 17. 1. 22).[1]

He is the standard of great power (1. 35. 3). He is stronger than immortality and death (13. 4. 46). He is the most powerful lord among the people (6. 33. 3). He and not Vṛtra was chosen as a lord by Bhūmi (12. 1. 37). The waters get the name Vār from him, since he stopped them flowing fervently (3. 13. 3).

He is born of Ekāṣṭakā, the daughter of Prajāpati. Ekāṣṭakā is the first day of the new year. Indra thus is the new year (3. 10. 12-13). He is born alone and has many names (6. 99. 1). The goddess of brilliancy (*tviṣi*) gave birth to Indra (6. 38. 4). He naturally confers splendour on the singers (3. 22. 2). His body is in the waters, on the earth and within the fire. With his body he pervades the atmosphere and wins the heaven (17. 1. 13). He is born among men (4. 11. 3). He is the first to be born. He is born for performing heroic deeds. He is noted for his heroic deed of assaulting the dragon (Vṛtra) (4. 24. 6). He is glorious from his birth (6. 39. 3). The thirteenth (i.e. the intercalary) month is the home, protection and shield of Indra (5. 6. 11-14). Number eight accompanies him (8. 9. 23).

He has formidable arms (4. 24. 2). He wields a golden hook in his hand to bend low the enemies (6. 82. 3). He has also a hundred formidable iron spears (4. 37. 8). He freed Bhūmi, the earth for himself from all enemies (12. 1. 10). Once in battle with Vṛtra, being pierced by him, he became thirsty and hungry. He then produced food on this world (2. 29. 7).

[1] For the detailed comparison see under Viṣṇu and Āditya.

Indra is mentioned to be a calf of Virāj. She went to the gods who called her. In a sacrificial ladle Savitṛ milked vigour from her (8. 10. 26).

Indra seems to be very much favourite with the Atharvaṇic poets. They invoke his help on various occasions. The mighty Indra, killing Vṛtra and other demons with his bolt is called upon to kill with the same bolt a thief, who robs the property in the house (4. 3. 5). With Aṅgiras, Agni and Savitṛ he quenches the most disastrous flesh-eating fire (3. 21. 8). Indra possesses a millstone by which worms are crushed (2. 31. 1). He himself as the lord of wealth (*Dhanapati*) kills the worms in the body of a boy (5. 23. 2). He is invoked to bless a person in disputes and make him superior to his opponent (2. 27. 7). With the help of a plant called *pāṭā* he overcomes the wolves or demons by name Sālāvṛkas (2. 27. 5)[1] and Sadānvas with his bolt (2. 14. 4). The person obstructing the sacrifice of the worshipper is killed by Indra (2. 12. 3). The malignant spirits such as Atrins are dispelled by Indra, who is urged by the oblations of a sacrificer (1. 7. 3). Indra comes to the help of a pregnant woman by attacking the demons, who bear huge head on their shoulders and who pierce the loins of the pregnant woman (8. 6. 13). Amulet or *phāla* or plough-share supplies the moral and physical power to Indra in securing victory against the demons (10. 6. 7). He ate the *pāṭā* plant to gain strength to kill demons (2. 27. 4). He throws the Dasyus in the deepest darkness (9. 2. 17). The attacking demons use burning arrows, which fall elsewhere than the target, when Indra interfers with his bolt (2. 3. 6, 1. 2. 3). A demon Udvācana was seized and killed by him (5. 8. 8). He is invoked to get success against adversaries (1. 9. 1). He leads the pious worshipper to the place where the knowers of the Brahman go (19. 43. 6).

Through *brahman* (spell) *jātavedas* Agni brought milk to Indra to exalt men (1. 9. 3). Indra is particularly dear to the Brāhmaṇas. He protects them from the curses of others (5. 18. 6). With the help of Indra a witchcraft (*kṛtyā*) whether worked by the gods or men, is destroyed by the Brāhmaṇa priests (5. 14. 7). The magical and medicinal plants get the store of power in them from Indra (4. 19. 8).

Indra brings about harmony among the discontended people in the family (6. 94. 3). Indra comforts the cattles that are branded on their ears for recognition (6. 141. 2). Indra brings back to his senses a mad person (6. 111. 4). He bestows splendour on a person, who implores his help (6. 5. 2). He, the Vasu, is invoked to bring about welfare on the paths on which he urges all (7. 55. 1). He is called upon to make the speaker successful and full of splendour in the deliberative and religious assembly (7. 12. 3).

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa. . . . on 2. 27. 5.

Indra rules the serpents. He destroys them. He sometimes hands them over to the priest, who charms them. He subdues them sometimes (10. 4. 10, 12, 17–18). In a chariot race among Indra, the gods, Varuṇa and the serpents, Indra came first and the serpents last (10. 4. 1). Indra fastened *auduṁbara* amulet for securing splendour for himself (19. 31. 7). The sages claim that the power of *jaṅgiḍa* amulet is due to Indra (19. 38. 1). The amulet of lead is given by Indra for killing demons (1. 16. 2). The amulets of *darbha* and of *apāmārga* are the armours of Indra (19. 30. 3, 20, 30). The gold used in the triple metal amulet is found by Indra in a secret treasure on the path of the heaven (19. 27. 9). The *astṛta* amulet has the power of seeing and breathing from Indra only (19. 46. 3).

Indra is interested in ousting the rival, who fights with oblation offered for the purpose of expelling others (6. 75. 1). He throws the rival beyond space and five clans of men, so that he would not come back (6. 75. 2-3).

In the woman's rite against her unfaithful lover Indra is invoked to make him impotent, to crush his testicles, and to make him put on the dress of women (6. 138. 2). To a person who seeks a bride for himself, Indra, the giver of brides assigns one (6. 82. 3). He is the controller of all power. So he bestows virile power derived from the essence of the most powerful plants, herbs and bulls on those who invoke for it (4. 4. 4).

As Indra is the king of the gods, he is also the symbol of the sovereignty on the earth. He is the earthly king. He is invoked to confer long life on the king (19. 24. 2).

He increases the prosperity of the king. He makes the king, sole ruler of his people and the most eminent leader having all rivals under his control (4. 22. 1). A portion of the wealth in the village, horses and cows comes to the king, as the highest authority through the favour of Indra (4. 22. 2). Thus the king, having Indra as companion becomes the most efficient king descended from Manu (4. 22. 5-7). In the rite for the restoration of an exiled king, Indra, the inspired god, calls back the king to be reinstated. The newly installed king gets the help of Indra in throwing off anyone who disputes his claim (3. 3. 3). In the election of a king by the subjects, the king-designate is passed on to the tribes as their future king by Indra. Like a human Indra, he assumes sovereignty (3. 4. 6). The Atharvaṇic priests make the king attain the position of a human Indra, by invoking Indra to increase him with authority, fortune, dominion, and royalty (6. 54. 1-2).

Indra plays much more important part in the battle rites. Herein one finds the source of the magical welfare, which, in an advanced form plays an important role in the Mahābhārata. Indra is invoked to kill the enemies from all quarters (6. 40. 3). As in the

RV, in the AV too, Indra is credited with the conquest of the Paṇis (4. 23. 5). The Maruts, who are the associates of Indra are led by him to the battle field. So Indra leads the army (3. 19. 6). The battle drum, a friend of Indra, is sounded to cheer up the warriors (5. 20. 8). With the help of Indra even a sick warrior wins the battle and defeats the enemy (2. 29. 3). The battle begins. The enemy pours volleys of arrows against the friends and followers of Indra. Indra disperses the attack of the arrows and the arrows fall off (1. 19. 1). The amulet of *pratisara* is granted by Indra to the warriors. The enemy is repelled by the magical amulet (8. 5. 15, 18). Indra the destroyer of the cities of the enemy, shakes the warriors of the enemy who are killed in thousands (8. 8. 1). They are crushed like a reed (8. 8. 3). Indra used atmosphere as the net to encircle the enemies. The quarters were the poles of the net. With a net of darkness the army is encircled and the barbarians are killed in hundreds, thousands, ten thousand and a hundred million (8. 8. 5-8). As a result of this encirclement, debility, formidable failure, disaster, fatigue, toil and confusion comes to the side of the enemy (8. 8. 9). In the battle which Indra waged against the barbarians, the Aṅgirasas went on slaying the army of the enemy (8. 8. 13). The Gandharvas, Apasrasas, the serpents, the gods, the holy folk, the Fathers, forest trees, herbs, plants, bipeds and quadrupeds help to kill the enemy (8. 8. 14-15). In addition to the net of darkness, Indra encompasses and ties the enemy, who comes in troops exhibiting their signs, by means of snares (6. 103. 2-3). The tying up of the enemies is specially designed by Indra and worked out by his penance (6. 104. 2). The arrows discharged by the strength of the two arms of the enemies, are pulled down and their hands, as it were, cease to exist by means of a missile of Indra, the *parāśara*. The enemy becomes handless and his whole vehemence and skill go away (6. 65. 1-3). The enemy collides on account of that great weapon. The enemy is confused, routed and dispersed (6. 66. 1-3, 67. 1-3) Indra bewilders the enemy (3. 1. 5). He confuses their plans and senses and consequently, the enemy has no alternative but to disperse (3. 1. 6, 2. 3). Indra strikes the enemy with the three-jointed magical missile, *triṣandhi* (11. 10. 27).

Indra, the great god of the RV is set in the AV in this way. In the battle rites his valour, his guidance, his tactics are the source of hope to the party which invokes his help by offering magical sacrifice.[1] The popularity of this great god can be best estimated by looking at the various occasions he is invoked. He thus becomes a god helpful to the invoked, in all social, religious, political and domestic matters. The poet becomes very friendly with him, and in the women's rites he is a very trusted helper of men and women

[1] See *Kauśika* 16.

seeking his help. The main principle in the whole treatment of the gods by the Atharvaṇic poets is fairly illustrated by this god. The god helps them against their enemies, rivals, demons, goblins and opponents on the platform, in sacrificial priesthood, or in love matters. No doubt the Atharvaṇic poets have brought all great divinities within the household of a common man and made them yield to their desires with their prayers or spells.

## II

## THE SOLAR DEITIES

In the last section it was observed that Indra was identified with the Sun. In this section it is proposed to study in detail the prominent deities related to the Sun. There are six solar deities in the AV. They are: Rohita, Mitra, Savitṛ, Sūrya, Viṣṇu and Pūṣan. Out of these six deities Rohita is a new and independant creation of the Atharvaṇic poets. The rest are found in the RV., although they are presented here in different aspects. The Atharvaṇic poets harnessed the Ṛgvedic deities for their own purpose, keeping some of their Ṛgvedic features and introducing some new traits in them. Savitṛ is a matchmaker and a god of the lovers. The Atharvaṇic poet is particularly asked to praise Savitṛ. Sūrya cures various skin diseases and kills worms by means of his rays. Mitra favours a number of sages in the Bhṛgvaṅgiras clan. The three strides of Viṣṇu are shown to have magical significance. Pūṣan expiates sin. Rohita is identified with almost all deities related to the Sun. He is presented here in a new form. Uṣas is also treated here.

The different solar deities are presented here in the same order as given in the beginning of this chapter.

### (1) Rohita

The whole of the thirteenth book of the Atharvaveda is devoted to the praise of Rohita, a solar deity. The word Rohita occurs about 75 times in the AV. Rohita means the ruddy one. He thus appears to refer to the appearance of the Sun in the morning or evening. Whitney[1] accordingly describes the word as 'a name or form of the sun.' Macdonell[2] considers that Rohita 'the Red One,' originally epithet of the sun, figures in the AV as a separate deity in the capacity of a Creator. He points out that in the RV there are many deities, whose names primarily either denote an agent or designate some attribute. This class according to him, appears in each case to

[1] See *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā* translated by Whitney and revised by Lanman H. O. S., Vol. VIII, p. 709.

[2] *Vedic Mythology*, p. 115.

be derived from an epithet applied to one or more deities. Such epithets gradually becoming detached, finally attained to an independant position. Rohita was, first, an epithet of the sun in the Vedic Mythology and then became an independant deity. But it is to be noted that Rohita does not figure as an epithet of the sun in the RV. The word Rohita occurs 17 times in the RV. In almost all cases it is an attribute qualifying the horses of Agni, Vāyu, or Maruts or of some king. Therefore the view, held by MACDONELL about Rohita is to be taken with some reserve. The word Rohita is an attribute, but it is not of the sun. It is possible, therefore, that Rohita is an independent creation of the Atharvaṇic seer Brahmā.[1] It is also noteworthy that other solar deities such as Sūrya, Savitṛ, Viṣṇu, Pūṣan and Mitra figure in the AV. Rohita is also identified with Savitṛ, Sūrya and Viṣṇu among the solar deities. He appears in the AV, as the great god of creation and ruler of all existence. His description is genuine and does not appear to be mechanical as is found in some hymns of the AV. The poet seems to have first thought of Rohita as an independant solar deity and then gradually elevated him to the position of the highest deity, comprising in itself all other deities, solar or otherwise.

The Paippalāda version of the AV has only two Rohita hymns in the XVIII Book, whereas the Śaunaka Version bas four hymns in the 13th Book. In the Paippalāda four verses (56-57, 59-60) from the 1st hymn of the 13th Book are wanting.

Rohita is described as *vajin*: vigorous (13. 1. 1), *yuvā kaviḥ*: a young poet (13. 1. 11), *vasujit*, *gojit* and *sandhanājit*: winning wealth, cows and battle (13. 1. 37). He is Āditya watching men. He is a liberal god (13. 2. 1). He drinks ghee (*ghṛtapāvā*) (13. 1. 24).

Rohita is the bright light going up in the sky (13. 2. 1.). He stands on the firmament and creates all forms (13. 1. 11). He is the consumer of food, lord of prayer and the lord of existence that is and that shall be (13. 3. 7). He is a yellow swan, flying to the sky. His expanded wings form the journey of thousand days. He puts all gods in his chest and goes on viewing the whole existence (13. 2. 38).

His births are one thousand and seven (13. 1. 37). He has hundred bodies (13. 4. 44). He is the white son of the black mother and a young child of the night (13. 3. 26). He is also described as being born of day, night, atmosphere, wind, sky, quarters, earth, fire, waters, *ṛcs* and sacrifice. All these sources of Rohita are again described to have been born of him (13. 4. 29-39). He is the son of Aditi (13. 2. 9).

He is within the waters (13. 1. 1). He is the power of the waters (13. 1. 2). He mounts the sky from the great ocean

[1] According to *Bṛhatsarvānukramaṇikā*, Brahmā is the seer of the hymns of Rohita.

(13. 1. 26). This mounting up or ascending of Rohita seems to have been derived from the root *ruh*: to ascend.[1] He is the lord of the sky and he defends sky, ocean, earth and all existence (13. 2. 41). He shines in the sky, in the atmosphere, on the earth and within waters. He has penetrated the oceans with his lustre. He has conquered the heaven or light (13. 2. 30). He clothes himself in the womb of the earth, heaven and atmosphere (13. 1. 11). His place is in the highest heaven (13. 1. 44). He is an immortal (13. 1. 44, 13. 2. 30). He becomes famous in all directions and among cattles, men and on the earth (13. 1. 38). He thought of the universal form and with great glory ascended the heaven (13. 1. 8).

Through him the gods secured immortality (13. 1. 7). The gods come to him with joy (13. 1. 13). He is the lord of the gods (13. 2. 25).

He gave birth to heaven and earth (*dyāvāpṛthivī*) (13. 1. 6), and made them firm (13. 1. 7). Aja Ekapada (Rohita) reposes on them (13. 1. 6). He measured the space and established the sky and firmament (13. 1. 7). Rohita is *tapasvin* (rich in penance). With his penance or heat (*tapas*) he ascends the sky and is born again and again (13. 2. 25). He thunders, lightens and throws down stones (hail-storm) (13. 4. 41).

Rohita is drawn in a chariot. He goes with brightness, making the waters flow (13. 1. 21). In his chariot, he goes at once (in a day) to both the horizons (13. 2. 6). His chariot is running easy, full of rays, pleasant, well driven and powerful. His horses are hundred or seven or many in number (13. 2. 7). His horses do not damage the chariot or injure Rohita on the way. Rohita crosses all difficulties in his ways, quickly (13. 2. 5). His horses are yellow, full of rays and immortal (13. 1. 24). His horses are gold-skinned (13. 2. 8). At his will, Rohita hastily moves from east to west, making by magic, the day and night (13. 2. 3). His road is very vast (13. 2. 4). Still he goes to the two borders like a calf to two joint mothers (13. 2. 13).

Rohita is the generator and the mouth of sacrifice. With mind, speech and hearing, the worshippers offer sacrifice to him (13. 1. 13). This aspect of Rohita might be due to his identification with Agni and also with the highest spirit, the Brahman. He is also described to be the sacrifice himself and the head of the sacrifice (13. 4. 40). Rohita shines in the sky on account of sacrifice. Sacrifice is the motive behind his movements in the sky. The sacrifices, purified by the Brahman, carry him up and he shines beyond the ocean (13. 1. 16). Rohita, though sacrificer himself, offers a sacrifice. In this sacrifice the wide ones (*urvī*) were the enclosures (*paridhis*). The earth was the altar. Rohita deposited

[1] Compare the words, *sarvā rurōha rohitō ruhaḥ* (13. 1. 4, 26).

the two fires, heat and cold in it. The mountains were the sacrificial posts and the rain was the ghee. The fire of Rohita was enkindled with the Brahman. From this fire, heat, cold and sacrifice were produced. These two fires, increased by the Brahman, increased with the Brahman, offered with the Brahman, kindled with the Brahman, performed the sacrifice.[1]

In this sacrifice, sky was the sacrificial fee. He then created fire and all living creatures with ghee in the form of rain. The fire shaped all these mountains. Rohita then said to the earth, 'Let all things—what are and what are to be, be born in you'. That sacrifice was first to be born. From it was born all this that shines. All this was adorned by the seer, Rohita (13. 1. 46-55). Rohita is thus the performer of a sacrifice from which all life and existence was produced. The description of the sacrifice is metaphorical. Owing to the sun (Rohita) there is heat and in his absence, cold. Both are caused by him. So there are two fires of Rohita. On the earth (which is the altar), they are deposited. Rain is the ghee, which flourishes life. Thus due to Rohita (heat, cold, and rain) the earth becomes the source of all existence. This sacrifice is enkindled, increased by the Brahman.[2] The *puruṣa sūkta* of the RV (x. 90) also gives such ideal sacrifice. Rohita deposited the sacrifice on Viśvakarman, the architect of the world. He naturally infused everything in this world with lustre and spirit (arising out of the heat of the fire in the sacrifice of Rohita). The seer of the hymn claims to have received brilliancy from Viśvakarman (13. 1. 14).

Rohita is identified with Agni. He shines forth with bright light (13. 1. 11). Rohita is Agni *jātavedas*, a bull with thousand horns, offered with ghee and having Soma on the back (13. 1. 12). Rohita becomes Agni in the evening. (13. 3. 13). Rohita as Agni is impelled by power and light. Therefore, he shines in the sky (13. 3. 23). The identification of Rohita with Agni is referred to above in the sacrifice of Rohita. Rohita is also the flesh-eating fire, a very deadly fire. With the help of the flesh-eating fire all rivals are dispersed and burnt (13. 1. 29).

Rohita is identified with Sūrya. The name Rohita also means the sun.[3] As I have explained above, the seer of this hymn has created a solar deity comprising some aspects of the solar gods and also of others. So Rohita is Sūrya too. Rohita as Sūrya looks upon the sky, the earth and waters. He is one eye of existence (13. 1. 45). He with his brightness shines all quarters. He is the protector (*gopa*: shepherd 13. 3. 2). He is the maker of the day (*divākara*:

[1] This is like the description of an ideal sacrifice given in the *Bhagavadgītā* 4. 24-27.

[2] The Brahman may mean here magical formula. Cf. S. K. BELVALKAR, *Brahman*, Proceedings of the Fourth Oriental Conference, Vol. II, p. 8.

[3] Cf. *Kauśika* 24. 42, Rohita is Āditya.

13. 2. 34). The rising sun is praised to kill all rivals of the singer, who would then conceal themselves into deep darkness (13. 1. 32). Rohita is the wise Sūrya in the sky. (13. 1. 39).

Rohita becomes Varuṇa. He also becomes Mitra when he rises. Becoming Savitṛ he goes through the sky, and becoming Indra he shines in the midst of the sky (13. 3. 13).

Rohita is Viṣṇu. Rohita, stretched up in the sky, the flying one, is perceived as Viṣṇu, surpassing all the moving world (13. 2. 31).

Rohita is Āditya, the son of Aditi (13. 2. 9, 37). He, as Āditya, is never exhausted. He makes himself of two forms, the rising one, rich in lights and the other, overpowering the dim spaces (13. 2. 28).

Rohita is a divine eagle (13. 2. 9), running on the back of the sky (13. 2. 37). He is the red eagle (13. 2. 36).

He is called Savitṛ by the people. He is Savitṛ, shining on the back of the sky. He as great Indra, covered with rays, goes to the sky. He is Dhātṛ, Vidhātṛ, Vāyu, Aryaman, Varuṇa, Rudra, Mahādeva and the great Yama (13. 4. 1-5). He becomes Kāla, Prajāpati and the great lord of the gods (13. 2. 39-40). All gods become one with him (13. 4. 21). Death and immortality become one with him. All witchcrafts obey his orders (13. 4. 27).

Rohita is called Kaśyapa, with bright vigorous light, in which seven Sūryas are set (13. 3. 10). Rohita is also called a child of Virāj (13. 1. 33).

Rohita is related to Atri. Atri carried Rohita from the flow of water to the heaven (13. 2. 4.). Atri maintained him in the sky for making months (13. 2. 12). Rohita is also identified with Atri. Rohita is a god within waters, thousand rooted and many powered Atri (13. 3. 15). Rohita was found out by Atri (13. 2. 36).

Rohita is a bull, wise, wonderful and shining upon all worlds (13. 2. 42). He is the bull, filling the earth (13. 2. 44). He has pointed horns, overcoming Agni and Sūrya (13. 1. 25).

He is Indra. Indra and Viṣṇu (an aspect of Rohita) are jointly praised in the 17th Book of the AV.

*Bṛhat sāman* clothes him from the front and the *rathantara* from behind (13. 3. 11). When the gods generated Rohita, *bṛhat* and *rathantara* were the two wings of equal power (13. 3. 12).

Finally Rohita is the Brahman. The gods know that he is the brahman (13. 2. 13).

Rohiṇī is the consort of Rohita. She is wise, beautiful, vast and splendid. She is submissive to Rohita. She is the seat of Rohita. The Gandharvas and Kaśyapas lead her (13. 1. 22-23).

According to BLOOMFIELD,[1] Rohita and Rohiṇī represent an allegorical exaltation of a king and his queen. Rohita and Rohiṇī are called upon to protect and exalt the king and queen. The root

[1] *SBE*, Vol. XLII, pp. 661-62.

*ruh* in the word Rohita is a suitable ground for such comparison as the king ascends (*ruh*) a throne, skin or a horse. Many stanzas of this hymn are in common with those utilised for the *rājasūya* sacrifice. In the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* II. 5. 2. 1-3 there occur a number of verses of this hymn. The commentator explains there, the word Rohita as a horse employed in the *aśvamedha* sacrifice. It is possible, according to BLOOMFIELD, that some stanzas of this hymn were originally composed for that purpose.[1]

There are, in this book of Rohita, a number of references which point out that Rohita is a king and the world he created, is his kingdom. The poet asks Rohita to enter into the kingdom that is full of pleasantness (13. 1. 1). The mounting of a king on a throne is suggested at 13. 1. 4. Rohita supports the king in his kingdom (13. 1. 1). He sets himself high on the clans, produced by him (13. 1. 2). Mounting the heaven, Rohita anoints the kingdom with ghee and milk (13. 1. 4). Enriched by the *brahman* and milk, he is to keep guard on the kingdom (13. 1. 9). With the gods, who possess kingdom, Rohita goes round the sun and grants kingdom to the king (3. 155). The clans in the kingdom of Rohita are produced by penance and they enter in him (13. 1. 10).

Rohita created Soma, waters, plants, herbs, cows, bipeds and quadrupeds (13. 1. 2). In him abide six directions (13. 3. 1). From him the winds blow and the oceans flow (13. 3. 2). All worlds breathe on account of him (13. 3. 3). In him are set six spaces (13. 3. 6). At the time of his birth he opened the earth and set the ocean in the atmosphere (13. 3. 22). He measures the thirteenth month having thirty parts (13. 3. 8).

The third hymn (13. 3) is utilised for the purpose of praising Rohita with a number of attributes and for the destruction and fastening the fetters on the person, who injures a Brāhmaṇa. Rohita, being a very powerful and lustrous god, might have been invoked in imprecations against a person, who harms a Brāhmaṇa.

From the description of Rohita given above, it will be easily noticed that Rohita is primarily the sun, being identified with a number of solar deities such as Sūrya, Mitra, Viṣṇu, Pūṣan and Savitṛ. He is also identified with Agni, Indra, Prajāpati and number of other deities. He is possessed of great lustre and eminence. He is also a creator, producing the world through sacrifice. Another aspect that is suggested, regarding Rohita is that he is a king. Thus the Atharvaṇic poet created in Rohita, a new solar deity, with the salient features of the Ṛgvedic solar deities and also endowed it with the eminence and grandeur of a creator.[2]

[1] See BLOOMFIELD, *AJP*, XII, p. 429.

[2] A. SHAMA SASTRI considers that Rohita is the name of a cyclic solar eclipse dark red in colour. He treats Rohita from astronomical point of view. Cf. *Poona Orientalist*, 1942, p. 162.

(2) MITRA

The name Mitra occurs about 60 times in the AV. Mitra is a solar deity. He has bright lustre (5. 12. 1). He anoints a person with splendour (3. 22. 2). He opens in the morning the door of the newly constructed house (9. 3. 18). Rohita becomes Mitra, when he rises in the morning (13. 3. 13).

Mitra also figures in a number of charms. He is the father of the reed, used in a charm for releasing the obstructed course of urine (1. 3. 2). He is invoked in a charm for granting wealth (1. 9. 1). Mitra removes the inauspicious signs of misfortune on the hands and feet (1. 18. 2). He arranges the seasons (3. 8. 1). He drives away the hatred of a person, who inflicts injury on another. The enemies are driven away by him (6. 4. 2). On the battle-field Mitra prepares a net for tying up of enemies (6. 103. 1). In the *godāna* ceremony anoints the eyes of the youth (*Kauśika* 54. 6). Collyrium is put by Mitra in the eyes of the youth (7. 30. 1). Mitra protects the king, while he is sleeping in his bed chamber. The *Purohita* takes the king to the stronghold i.e. the bed chamber, which becomes to the king both refuge and defence (19. 19. 1). Mitra is also a king (2. 28. 5). He is also invoked to confer long-life on a person (2. 28. 1).

Mitra and Varuṇa are jointly praised at various places. They together occur about 25 times in the AV. Mitra and Varuṇa are invoked to confer long-life on a person, who should die of old age only and not due to any accident (2. 28. 2). They kill the enemies (2. 28. 2).

Mitra and Varuṇa bring the ointment or salve for enjoyment. They went after it and brought it back for themselves (19. 44. 10).

They keep off the malignant weapons of the enemy (1. 20. 2). In a battle rite for the success of a king, they are invoked to enrich with honey, the kingdom, so that it should be rich in progeny. Both of them are wise or inspired deities (6. 97. 2).

In a charm for compelling the love of a man to turn towards a woman, beans are scattered according to *Kauśika* (36. 13-14). In this connection Mitra and Varuṇa are praised to sprinkle love or *smara*, burning in waters with mental agitation. This causes mental uneasiness in the person, who is the target, and is then compelled to come to that particular beloved (6. 132. 5).

Mitra is a deity presiding over day and Varuṇa is one, which presides over night. Both of them are praised to be of one mind in protecting the life of a person (2. 28. 2). Mitra and Varuṇa bring about prosperity. They went out once, to bring ointment. With that ointment they confer happiness and enjoyment on human beings. So the ointment for happiness is given by them (19. 44. 10). They are invoked to keep off the deadly weapons of the enemy and to throw them back to the enemies (1. 20. 2).

*Mṛgāra-sūkta* 4. 29 is exclusively devoted to the praise of Mitra

and Varuṇa. Both of them increase *ṛta*, are accordant and drive away the malicious spirits. They protect the truthful ones in the battle. They, watching men, go to drink Soma[1] (4. 29. 2). They favour Aṅgiras, Agasti, Jamadagni, Atri, Kaśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, Śyavaśva, Vadhryaśva, Purumidha, Vimada, Saptavadhri, Bharadvāja, Gaviṣṭhara, Viśvāmitra, Kutsa, Kakṣivat, Kaṇva, Medhātithi, Triśoka, Uśanas Kāvya, Gotama and Mudgala.[2] (4. 29. 3-6).

Their chariot is of true path and of straight reins. It goes on ruining him, who goes against the worshipper (4. 29. 6).

Mitra and Varuṇa are also described as the lords of showers and rain (5. 24. 5).

In a charm to destroy demons, they are praised to grant protection against the demons, by their gleam. The demons, thus confused do not find out the witchcraft-maker or his residence (6. 32. 3). In a rite for the success of a king they are invoked to enrich the domain of the king with honey (6. 97. 2). In the *garbhādhāna* rite, they are asked to deposit the seed (5. 25. 4). According to *Kauśika* 36. 10–11, in a woman's love-charm, love is won by addressing the head and ear or by wearing the hair of the person to be affected. In this connection Mitra and Varuṇa are addressed to unite the girl with her lover (6. 89. 3).

### (3) SAVITṚ

The word occurs about 120 times in the AV.

Savitṛ is born in the golden, pure and purifying waters (1. 33. 1). He is within the waters (6. 1. 2). He is young, of pleasing speech and very propitious (6. 1. 2). His laws are always true (7. 24. 1). He is a benevolent god having all chosen things with him (5. 27. 3). He is addressed as Deva. He is the creator of heaven and earth (7. 14. 1). His deeds are like an inspired poet. He is of true impulse. He bestows treasure on his devotees. His splendour is sublime. His high light shines brightly on the world. His hand is golden (7. 14. 2). For the first father (sacrificer, according to Sāyaṇa) he impelled height and width (7. 14. 3). He is a household god. He is praised to give desirable things, abounding in cattles. He grants the fathers, treasure, power and life. At the sacrifice he is called on to drink Soma (7. 14. 4). The favour of Savitṛ is very wonderful, having all chosen things. It is like a full-fed, thousand streamed (cow), milked by Kaṇva for Bhaga (7. 15. 1).

Savitṛ confers blessings and elevates one to good fortune. He makes a bright person more bright (7. 16. 1).

Savitṛ invests Rohita with lustre (13. 1. 20). Rohita becomes Savitṛ and moves through the sky (13. 3. 13).

[1] The word is *babhru*. Babhru is a king referred to at RV 5. 22. 10. Sāyaṇa explains the word as Soma brought in a yellow car. WHITNEY translates it as 'brown Soma'.

[2] Here is a list of 22 sages, favoured by Mitra and Varuṇa. Most of them are prominent Vedic seers. A number of these sages belong to Bhṛgvangiras clan.

Savitṛ is invoked in many charms. He is invoked in a charm for removing the unlucky signs on the body of a woman. He drives away the inauspicious marks on the hand and feet. As a result of this favour of Savitṛ, the woman secures good fortune (1. 18. 2). The charm also removes all frightful things from her body, hair and face. Thus Savitṛ urges her to prosperity (1. 18. 3). Savitṛ also plays an important part in a charm to secure a husband for a woman. Savitṛ urges the suitable husband to go to a woman, who longs to have a suitable match (2. 36. 8). He thus brings about the union of the suitable bride and bridegroom. Thus Savitṛ can be called a god of lovers.

During the day time the cattles are let loose. Savitṛ urges them to come to their stall in the evening quickly (2. 26. 1).

He is offered an offering in a rite which secures for a king, love and friendship of his kinsmen and excellence (3. 8. 2). In a rite at the time of the coronation of a king, Savitṛ is praised to make the king, rich in friends (4. 8. 7).

Savitṛ is invoked for securing long life (3. 11. 4), for prosperity in trade (3. 15. 6), for quenching the flesh-eating fire (*kravyādagni*, 3. 21. 8). In a charm for securing virile power, he is asked to increase the strength of generative organ (4. 4. 6). He fixes the site of a new house. When a new house is to be constructed, Savitṛ is asked to fix a proper place for the house (3. 12. 4). When the new house is constructed, the owner of the house before residing in it, performs a sacrifice in which ghee is offered. Savitṛ is invoked, in this sacrifice to employ the sacrificial prose formulas (*yajus*) and the fuel (*samidhs*). He is called a bull here (5. 26. 2).

The deity Savitṛ seems to be specially worshipped by the Atharvans. Ātharvaṇa (a son or descendant of Atharvan) is asked to sing the praise of Savitṛ, who impells immortality and both good praises (*bṛhat* and *rathantara sāmans*—according to SĀYAṆA 6. 1. 1-3).

All men do their duty under the inspiration of Savitṛ (6. 23. 3).

In the ceremony of the first shaving of a boy (*godāna*), Savitṛ plays an important part. He comes with a razor to shave (6. 68. 1). Savitṛ shaved the head of Soma and king Varuṇa with a razor; with the same razor a Brāhmaṇa or priest, in the *godāna* ceremony is to shave the head of the boy, so that he may be rich in cows, horses and progeny (6. 68. 3).

Savitṛ is praised to bestow riches on the worshipper. The riches are dug out by Indra, Agni and other deities. He is thus the lord of riches, who liberally hands over the wealth to his devotees (7. 24. 1).

Savitṛ drives away all ill omens. Detraction, evil-gossip, reproach and sneezing have no harmful effect on account of Savitṛ (19. 8. 4). If a man sets on business under a lucky asterism and if some one from behind calls his name or does anything such as sneezing or

evil gossip, it is an ill omen, which thwarts the business in hand. According to the commentator SĀYAṆA, this verse, containing an invocation to Savitṛ, removes all evil effects of such acts.

Savitṛ and Vāyu are praised together in one hymn (4. 25). They penetrate, encompass and protect all things in this world (9. 25. 1). They measured the expanse of the earth and made the space firm. None reaches their degree. People sleep and become awake after them. They dispel all bad deeds, demons and a female demon by name Śimidā. They give men refreshment and strength. They free men from consumption. They come from high place and enjoy the intoxicating Soma. In the rule of these two deities the best blessings come to men (4. 25).

Savitṛ in the AV is a solar deity, residing in (celestial) waters, benevolent and possessed of mighty deeds. He bestows treasures on men. He is young, propitious and charming. He drinks Soma in the sacrifice. He has golden hand. He is particularly praised by the Atharvans. He is a matchmaker and a god of lovers. He safely brings home the cattles let loose during the day. He increases the friends of a king. Savitṛ thus is a god conferring fortune and bliss in public and private life. His association with the Atharvans is particularly interesting.

### (4) SŪRYA

In the AV, Sūrya is a tool in the hands of the witchcraft-makers and medicine-men. His rays and heat attract their minds. They use him for curing various diseases and for making the human body more lustrous. There is nothing of that magnanimity and splendour of Sūrya, as noticed in the RV.

The word occurs about 210 times in the AV.

Sūrya possesses hundred powers (1. 3. 5). Dhātṛ supports him (6. 60. 3). He shines in eternal time (*kāla*) (19. 53. 6). He is fearless in his movement (2. 15. 3). As *divākara*, he is born of Vṛtra (4. 10. 5). When he rises up in the sky, he withdraws the lustre of all lunar mansions (7. 14. 1). Deva set him in motion (3. 31. 7).

Sūrya is invoked in many rites.

In a rite to regulate the flow of urine reed is used. This reed is described as the issue of Sūrya. He thus causes to cure the flow of urine (1. 3. 5). He is invoked to get success over the enemies. On account of his help, the enemies of the person are laid low and the person rises to the heaven (1. 9. 2). The rising Sūrya is called upon to remove the sore diseases, internal malady, heart break and yellowness of eyes, skin, teeth and nails, which are the unmistakable signs of *Paṇḍu* or jaundice. As soon as Sūrya rises, heart-burn and yellowness go away. The red lustre of Sūrya is employed to envelope the body of the patient, which becomes eventually free from

jaundice (1. 22). Different deities preside over the different limbs of human body. Sūrya presides over the region of the eye (5. 9. 7). He is the lord of the eyes. He is, therefore, invoked to protect them (2. 16. 3). By his heat, rage and burning, Sūrya is pressed to kill those, whom the worshipper hates and who hates him (2. 21). The lustre of Sūrya has a great effect on incantations. He makes the incantations possessed of more power. Thus he is invoked to make the incantation for securing virile power, more powerful and effective (4. 4. 2). The lustre of Sūrya is also, utilised by the seers of the AV in a charm to kill the worms (*krimi*). Sūrya looking at all things, goes on smashing the seen and unseen worms (5. 23. 6). In a rite to cure a person, who is dangerously ill, the Lord Sūrya is invoked to bring the sick man back from the jaws of death by means of his rays. Thus the Atharvaṇic seer believed in the healing aspect of the rays of Sūrya (5. 30. 15). Sūrya kills demons. He, the Āditya, rising from the mountains kills the demons (6. 52. 1). In a charm to remove the *apacits* (*gaṇḍamālā*) Sūrya is called upon to make remedy (6. 83. 1). The clay from ant-hill is supposed to be a medicine for serpent bite. In a charm to avert the poison of serpent, Sūrya is mentioned to have given the medicine against the poison of serpent-bite (6. 100. 1). Wisdom comes from the rays of Sūrya. In a charm for developing the wisdom of a person, wisdom is made to enter in the person through the rays of Sūrya (6. 108. 1 and 5). Sūrya is always prayed to extend the life of a person and to enable him to stay longer in this world. He shines in the sky for the happiness of a man for whom the rite for extending the life of a man is performed. He protects the man from the assault of the divine weapons (8. 1. 1, 5, 12). Sūrya also helps a pregnant woman. The devils, who attack the embryo of a pregnant woman, do not bear the sight of Sūrya. Thus Sūrya drives away the niggards, buck clothed, ill-smelling, red-mouthed, the *makakas*, who harass the pregnant woman (8. 6. 12). In a charm to destroy the rivals and enemies, water-thunderbolts are employed. They are nothing but throwing away water with all magical emphasis. The same is styled as the step of Viṣṇu. This step of Viṣṇu is sharpened by Sūrya. Thus Sūrya makes the water-thunderbolts more effective (10. 5. 26). There is also a mention of a world possessed of Sūrya. By the offering of a goat with five dishes of rice, the sacrificer goes the world of Sūrya (9. 5. 18). A sacrifice may be offered with a view to harass the other party. In this sacrifice the offerings may be made from above, so that harassment would be caused from above. By means of a rite (preparing holy water) the enemy is dispersed by going to Sūrya and is scattered away (4. 40. 7).

In the incident about the abduction of a Brāhmaṇa's wife, it is pointed out that Sūrya takes a prominent part in the restoration of the wife to her Brāhmaṇa husband. He goes on telling all five clans

of men that Brāhmaṇa, and not Vaiśya or Kṣatriya is the husband of Brāhmaṇa's wife (*brahmajyāyā*) (5. 17. 9).

The armies of gods have the banners of Sūrya (5. 21. 12). Maruts are described as having the skin of Sūrya (1. 26. 3).

Sūrya has two wives. They move about with understanding, decked with banners, unaging and having abundant seed. They are the dawns (8. 9. 12).

Rohita is superior to Sūrya. In the lustre of Rohita, seven Sūryas are set (13. 3. 10). In the whole of the 17th Book of the AV there is a prayer to Sūrya identified with Viṣṇu and Indra (Viṣāsahi). With lustre of Sūrya, the singer expects to redress his grievances. His haters should be smashed and he should not be subjected to his hater (17. 1. 6). Sūrya is boat having hundred oars. He enables his singer to pass over the night and day without being harmed (17. 1. 26).

Sūrya thus is pictured by the Atharvaṇic seers as a great power in Nature, which can be harnessed for the purposes of incantations and medicine. They realized his great power and used him in their prayers to bring about the well-being of a person, for whom the rites were being performed.

### (5) Viṣṇu

Viṣṇu occupies a minor place in the solar deities of the AV. In a very few places he is praised singly. Mostly he is praised in association with other deities, in magical and sacrificial rites. His attributes are the same as found in the RV.

The word occurs 65 times in the AV.

Viṣṇu is in the mid-region of the sky. He flies swiftly, like a bird in the sky. He overpowers all those, who move with his strength (13. 2. 31).

His heroic deeds are many. He bestows cattle on his worshipper. He is praised to set the worshipper in comfort in the highest heaven (17. 1. 6), and to favour him among those whom he sees and sees not (17. 1. 7). The witch-craft makers approach Viṣṇu with fetters in their hands to arrest him, and thus to employ him in their practices, but the seer hopes that they would not damage him in sea or within waters. He ascends the sky, quitting their imprecations. So he would be gracious to the seer, who praises him (17. 1. 8).

Viṣṇu is praised to secure his brightness and lustre (17. 1. 20) and the Brahmanical splendour (17. 1. 21). He is described as *virāj* (wide-ruler), *svarāj* (self-ruler) and *samrāj* (universal ruler) 17. 1. 22-23. He is also called *ghṛtayoni*, born of ghee (7. 26. 3). He grants bliss to the worshipper (19. 9. 6, 10. 9.) He removes sin (11. 6. 2).

Waters are used for magical purposes in a rite to destroy adversaries. These waters are charged with magical powers, and are

sprinkled on all sides. The performer of this rite takes three steps. These steps are identified with those of Viṣṇu referred to in the RV (1. 22. 17). In the AV the steps of Viṣṇu, which are sharpened by earth and brightened by Agni, kill the rivals and enemies. The performer of the rite takes strides, from the earth and consequently dispositions him, who hates him and whom he hates. The other party is not allowed to live or breathe. He quits his life instantly. Thus his enemy or rival is expelled from the sky directions, *ṛcs*, sacrifice, plants, waters and life (10. 5. 25–35).

He grants prosperity along with other deities (3. 20. 4). He is the lord of the firm direction (*dhruvā*). He is invoked in a charm for expelling the enemies. In his jaws is laid the man, who hates his worshipper and whom he hates (3. 27. 5). He is thus a horrible deity with mighty jaws, which swallow the enemies of the worshipper. In the *garbhādhāna* rite, Viṣṇu is praised to lay the womb (5. 25. 5). In the offering of ghee in sacrifice in the newly built house, he employs his fervour (*tapas*) and brings prosperity (5. 26. 7). He brings riches to the worshipper (7. 18. 4).

Viṣṇu and Varuṇa are jointly praised in a hymn (7. 25). They have established the space (*rajas*) and they are heroic in their valour. They rule the *rajas* by their powers. Everything that shines, breathes and looks mighty is in his power. The first invocation of a priest in the morning, goes to Viṣṇu and Varuṇa by the old law of God (7. 25).

He is called upon to prolong the life of a sacrificer and drink ghee (7. 26. 3).

Agni and Viṣṇu receive joint prayer at 7. 29. They drink and enjoy ghee, which is called 'secret'. They put on seven treasures on themselves and go to drink ghee (7. 29).

It may thus be observed that Viṣṇu is an aspect of the sun and is a deity of mid-region. His jaws are mentioned to be formidable. His steps are used in a magical rite. He brings prosperity and cattles to the singer. His association with Varuṇa is peculiar.

### (6) Pūṣan

The word occurs about 30 times in the AV.

In the AV, Pūṣan figures as a deity, which fertilises and brings prosperity to men and cattles.

He recovers the lost things and unites them with the original owner (7. 10. 4).

Pūṣan removes the sin caused by the marriage of a younger brother before the elder brother.[1] This sin, the gods washed off on Trita, who in turn on men. Gods are invoked to remove the sin on man by means of spell or incantation. Pūṣan is also invoked to remove that sin (6. 113).

[1] See Sāyaṇa's comment on 6. 113, and BLOOMFIELD, *SBE*, Vol. XLII, pp. 521-27.

In tying an amulet, called *trivṛt* on a man, who desires prosperity, Pūṣan is invoked to anoint the amulet with ghee and milk. As a result of the tying of this amulet, anointed by Pūṣan, affluence in food, men and cattle comes to a person (5. 28. 3).

Pūṣan brings about harmony in the contending parties. In a charm to secure harmony among the different parties he is invoked to make those parties pathless, so that they should come directly to the person who seeks harmony (6. 73. 3).

Pūṣan sets the person, who performs magical rite to remove misery, in the world of the blessed (16. 9. 2).

In the funeral rite Pūṣan is asked to carry the diseased to the world of the gods, in his car along the road, which is crossed by goats (18. 2. 53).

In a battle rite Pūṣan is invoked along with Indra to block the paths of the enemy on all sides so that the enemy is confounded. Pūṣan and Indra go about on the battle-field (6. 67. 1).

While ploughing the fields for cultivation Pūṣan protects the furrows (3. 17. 4.).

For the safe delivery of a pregnant woman, Pūṣan is invoked. He relaxes the pains of the woman and the joints go apart to bring about easy delivery (1. 11. 1).

### (7) Uṣas

The word occurs about 50 times in the AV. This deity occupies a minor place in the AV. She is everlasting, born of old, ancient and encompassing all. This great goddess of Dawn shines forth and looks forth at every one who winks (10. 8. 30). Agni looks after the apex of the dawn (7. 82 4). The beings in this world are in constant charge of the Mother Night, Dawn and Day. Night Mother hands over the creatures to the Dawn (19. 48. 2). She is praised to secure wealth and heroes (19. 49. 6). The *kṣetriya* (heriditary) disease vanishes as the Dawn fades out (3. 7. 7). The Dawn is in agreement with Vāk (16. 6. 5). In the marriage rite the newly wedded wife while ascending the nuptial bed, is asked to give birth to progeny; and like Indrāṇī to watch Dawn tipped with light (14. 2. 31). After waking up from the nuptial bed, the newly wedded wife enjoying herself along with good cows, sons and houses is expected to pass the outshining dawns (14. 2. 43). Thus on many occasions Uṣas is praised to grant long life and blessings. In connection with Vrātya, she is spoken of very contemptuously of Vrātya in the South: Uṣas is his harlot (15. 2. 13). On the whole, the Atharvaṇic poets do not attach much importance to this deity. She has been neglected. There is not that charm and beauty of Uṣas as they are found in the RV. She is also not employed for magical purpose by the poets. It thus seems that in the Atharvaṇic Mythology Uṣas is totally neglected.

# III

## VIVASVAT, ASVINS AND SURYA

Vivasvat is the father of Aśvins, Yama and Manu. Vivasvat and Aśvins are treated in this chapter and Yama is treated independently in the next. All these mortals have been later on deified. Aśvins are very much favourite with the agriculturists, as they protect his crops and corn from the ravages by rats, pests, etc. They are considered as twins sitting back to back and putting on the same garment and drinking together. Sūryā is the daughter of Savitṛ. As such, she should have been included in the previous chapter along with the solar deities. But as the spouse of Aśvins, she is treated here. Sūryā is represented as a bride, whose marriage is celebrated according to the Ātharvaṇa fashion. Her marriage is of an ideal type before the poets. So, she is sometimes independently mentioned in connection with her marriage and sometimes identified with the human bride. All the details of her marriage are given here to have full idea about the Atharvaṇic details of the marriage myths. All such details of the marriage rites, form the foundations of the practical religion of the Atharvaveda.

### VIVASVAT

The word occurs ten times in the AV. He is the son-in-law of Tvaṣṭṛ and the husband of Saraṇyu. His sons are Yama and Yamī from Saraṇyu, Manu from Savarṇā and Aśvins from the horse and mare, the assumed forms of Vivasvat and Saraṇyu. Manu is the founder of the human race and the first king. Yama is the first of the departed souls to the other world. Aśvins are the medicine men, who are elevated to the rank of the deities. It is thus suggested[1] that Vivasvat was a mortal. In this connection in AV 18. 2. 33, it is pointed out that they hid the immortal (Savarṇā) from the mortal. However, later on he seems to have been deified. Yama is possessed of lustre superior to Vivasvat (18. 2. 32). He is above Vivasvat. Vivasvat is praised to set the worshipper in immortality and that he should scare away death (18. 3. 62). Gods are in agreement with Vivasvat, in whose seat they maintain themselves and revel (18. 1. 35). Thus in the AV, there is nothing to point to the identification of Vivasvat with the sun. He is immortal. All gods revel in his seat. Men pray him for conferring immortality on them. Thus his position as the immortal and as the father of Yama is clear beyond doubt.

[1] See Bloomfield, *JAOS*, 15, 172-188.

## AŚVINS

The word occurs about 80 times in the AV. According to a story[1] Aśvins are the twins born of Savarṇā and Vivasvat. Sarvarṇā is the substitute or the double given by Saraṇyu, who first married Vivasvat (18. 2. 33).

They are invoked in the morning (3. 16. 1). They are the physicians of the gods (7. 55. 1). They put on garlands of lotuses (5. 25. 3). They are offered hot milk, heated in a cauldron (7. 73. 4). Through the *camasa* (spoon) of Aśvins, the gods drink their share of offerings (7. 73. 6). They are prayed to bestow on the singer, splendour, strength and sweetness of honey from the bees, so that he may speak in the assembly of people, with words full of splendour and influence (9. 1. 10. 19).

Aśvins protect agriculture with the help of the amulet of *khadira* (10. 6. 12). They unite a loving couple (2. 30. 2). They make paths easy for the restoration of a banished king (3. 3.). They first call the king at his election by the people (3. 4. 4). They protect the seers (6. 3. 3) and anoint them with delicious honey (6. 69. 2). They bind the enemies in the battle with ropes (6. 103. 1). They kill rats by cutting off their heads and backs, and bind their mouths, so that they would not eat grains (6. 50. 1). They impress a sign on the ears of the cows with an iron axe for their recognition (6. 141. 2).

They put on the same garment and drink together (2. 29. 6).

In the marriage rite they are invoked to bestow on the bride, the splendour that is placed in dice, wine and cows (14. 1. 35).

## SURYA

The 14th book of the AV deals with the marriage of Sūryā, the daughter of Savitṛ. The traditional seer of this book is Sūrya Sāvitrī. Sūryā is the deity of this book. The book deals with the marriage rites and the *Mantras* used in the marriage of Sūrya and consequently in the pattern of the Atharvaṇic marriage, which has been described as the *saurya* marriage by Kauśika (76. 31). The other forms of marriage mentioned by Kauśika (76. 32. 33). are Brāhma and Prājāpatya.

In the two Sūktas of the book, there are 139 *ṛcs*. There are about 51 *ṛcs* occurring in the RV 10.85 and other *Maṇḍalas*,[2] that are repeated in this book of the AV, with or without variants. Paippalāda has almost all verses found in the Śaunaka recension excepting a few verses.

[1] See footnote, p. 249.

[2] Outside the Ṛgvedic Marriage hymn 10. 85, the *ṛcs* taken from other *Maṇḍalas* are as follows: 3. 33. 13, 7. 96. 4ab, 8. 1. 12, 8. 80. 7, 10. 30. 4 and 10. 40. 12-13.

In these two hymns (14. 1-2), three main rites of the Saurya-marriage are described. They are: *vivāha* (marriage ceremony proper), *udvāha* (bridal procession to the bridegroom's house) and *caturthikā karma* (rites on the fourth day).

The marriage rites are in the Saurya pattern.[1] Sūryā is identified with Soma (moon); so at the beginning of the rites she is praised as if she is Soma. Soma is set in the sky, just as by the Truth[2] the earth is established, by the sun, the sky, and by *ṛta* the Ādityas (14. 1. 1.). By means of Soma the Ādityas are strong and Pṛthivī is great. Soma is on the lap of the lunar mansions (14. 1. 2.). Soma is the moon and the Soma plant. By pressing a herb, one gets the Soma juice. Only the Brāhmaṇas could drink the Soma-juice and no other earthly being (14. 9. 3.). Soma is inexhaustible. When the priests drink Soma, it fills itself again. Vāyu is the defender of Soma (14. 1. 4.). The operations of pressing Soma are guarded by coverings and defended by watchman.[3] Soma stands hearing the sound of the pressing stones on the earth (14. 1. 5.). When Sūryā (who is the same as Soma or the moon) went to her husband, thought was the pillow, sight was the ointment and heaven and earth were the treasures. Aśvins were the wooers of Sūryā, and their marriage is the ideal pattern for all to follow. When Sūryā started for her husband's house, she had put on excellent garment, *raibhi* (a bard) was their parting song, the hero-praises (*nārasaṁsis*) led her to her house, the *gāthās* (songs) adorned her.[4] The *stomas* (praises) were the cross-piece on the chariot-pole[5]. Meter was *kurīra* and *opaśa*[6]. These two form the head-dress of women. Thus in the divine company, Sūryā started for her husband's house. Aśvins were the wooers and Agni was the match-maker (14. 1. 6-8). Savitṛ was pleased with his sons-in-law, Aśvins and gave Sūryā to them. Soma was the bride-seeker (14. 1. 9). When Sūryā went to her husband's house mind was her car, its canopy was heaven, it has two white bulls. Thus Sūryā went to her husband with the speed of

[1] Kauśika 75. 1-3 points out that the marriage should be celebrated in the months from *kārtika* to *vaiśākha*, but not in the month of *caitra*.

[2] PPP reads *satrena* for *satyena*, by essence.

[3] The word is *bārhat*. SĀYAṆA explains the word as 'the seven guardians of celestial Soma;' WEBER: 'warders of Soma;' GRIFFITH: 'by hymns in *bṛhatī* matre in which Soma is praised'.

[4] *Raibhi, nārāsaṁsīs* and *gāthās* are personified as the attendants and friends of the bride in the marriage rites.

*Raibhi* is the singer or a bard. The word *anudeyī* and *nyocanī* are explained by St. PETERSBERG *dictionary* as 'dowary and ornament'. WHITNEY explains the latter as the welcoming one.

[5] *Pratidhi* is the word. It is explained as 'an article of woman's dress' by WHITNEY. PPP. reads *paridhi* which means, 'the sacrificial enclosures'.

[6] *Opaśa* is explained by SĀYAṆA as 'woman's organ and *kurīra* is one possessing hair.

mind (14. 1. 10). The two bulls, yoked to her car, were attended by *ṛc* and *sāman*, and were going peacefully[1]. The wheels of her chariot were clean and *vyāna* (out-breathing) was its axle. In such a car, Sūryā ascended to go to her home (14. 1. 12). Savitṛ sent off this bridal procession of Sūryā. The cows were killed for the festival in the *maghā* lunar mansion and in the *phālgunī* lunar mansion the marriage took place[2]. In the bridal procession of Sūryā, Aśvins went with their three-wheeled chariot, asking for her hand (14. 1. 14). All gods consented to this proposal (14. 1. 15). The two wheels of the chariot of Sūryā are the heaven and earth. One wheel that is hidden, may be the year[3]. When the fire is lighted, offerings are made along with the prayer that the husband and wife should be together and that they should attain their full life with sons and grandsons, rejoicing and well-homed (14. 1. 22). After this the bride is given to eat a preparation of cooked rice and sesame.[4] The prospective bridegroom sends his friend and a priest to go in search of a suitable bride. The two are expected to bring success with them speaking rightly (not deceiving the bride). Brahmaṇaspati[5] is prayed to make the prospective husband shine for the bride. (14. 1. 31). The bride should be attracted by the prospective husband, by the truthful words of the match-maker. The marriage is settled. The bridegroom arrives in the village or city of the bride. The comrades going a-wooing should have paths straight and free from thorns (14. 1. 34). The bride goes to the water reservoir or river to bring water. She is escorted by the Brahmā priests from the front and rear. Apāṁ Napāt is praised here as one, who shines in waters without fuel and whom the priests praise in sacrifices, and is asked to give waters rich in honey (14. 1. 37). The bride throws a clod of earth in water. She then takes bath. She throws away a handful of water, harmful and injurious to the health and takes up another, which is auspicious. She also fills a jar with the water (14. 1. 38). The jar filled by her with water is given to the Brāhmaṇas to carry it to the home. The Brāhmaṇas take water for her bathing. The water they carry is praised not to kill heroes. Brahmā goes ahead of her and an archer follows her.[6] She then goes to the fire of Aryaman.[7] The father-in-law and brother-in-law look at her, while she is going to

[1] This speaks of the harmony between the RV and SV.

[2] PPP reads *vihavyate*: 'is offered in sacrifice'. The RV version reads *aghāsu* for *maghāsu* and *arjunī* for *fālgunī*. WHITNEY thinks that the evidence is utterly indefinite to extract a date out of this. It would perhaps mean that these are the suitable months to celebrate the marriage rites.

[3] Sāyaṇa explains this in his comment on RV 10. 85. 16.

[4] See Kauśika 75 and AV 2. 36.

[5] A *brāhmaṇa* is sent with the friend of the prospective bridegroom.

[6] See Kauśika 75. 18.

[7] GRIFFITH on 14. 1. 39 explains that this is the husband's household fire round which the bride walks, sprinkling the floor of the room with the holy water.

the fire (14. 1. 39). The jar of water is kept on a branch of a *palāśa* tree. This water is to be used for all rites in this ceremony. Offering of ghee is made to Aryaman, a god of good friendship and a deity, who finds a husband (14. 1. 17). The hair of the bride are plaited. She is released from the various fetters with which Savitṛ has tied her. Thus an easy pawye is made for her to go with her husband (14. 1. 58). The bride is given bath with hot water with the spell, 'what witchcraft may be done on the chair, cushion, covering and at the wedding—all these we deposit in a bath' (12. 2. 65). Then she is sprinkled with cold water. She is at this time blessed to be supreme among her father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law and mother-in-law, when she would go to her husband's house, as the mighty river Sindhu has won for herself the supremacy of all rivers (14. 1. 43). Also she is blessed with the splendour that is in dice, in wine and in cows (14. 1. 35). After the bath her body is dried with a piece of cloth. That garment is given to the person, who escorted her. The garment contains the impurity and sin, which are handed over. She becomes holy. Any ill-deed or pollution at the marriage or bridal procession is thrown off on the dress of this matchmaker, who escorts her (14. 2. 66-67). The match-maker or escort may take the garment by means of a stick and throw it away. She is then given new garments, which are supposed to be spun, woven, stretched out and made with the borders, by the goddesses, who would wrap her to old age, since a person longing to have a long life puts on this garment (14. 1. 45). The garment worn on this occasion is given by Tvaṣṭṛ for the attainment of beauty, under the direction of Bṛhaspati and wise poets. With this garment Savitṛ and Bhaga, enveloped Sūryā for progeny (14. 1. 53). This garment is to be put on, like an *yajñopavīta* (the sacred thread). Her hair are combed with an artificial, hundred toothed comb, so that all impurity in the hair would be removed (14. 2. 68). She is girded up with piece of cloth at the waist. This girding up is for securing well-being, offsprings, good fortune, wealth, obedience to her husband and immortality (14. 1. 42). The girdle is nothing but the milk of the earth and herbs leading to progeny and riches (14. 2. 70). A bead, made up of *madhu* tree,[1] is strung into a thread made red with lac and is tied in the ring-finger (*anāmikā*).[2] After this ceremony of preparation for handing over the daughter (*kanyādāna*) before the actual marriage rite, the priest takes the bride, holding her hand out of the wedding chamber (*kautukagṛha*). Bhaga[3] is asked to lead her out of the wedding chamber, holding her

[1] AV 1. 34.

[2] Kauśika 76. 9, points out that the knot should be on the outer surface and the bead should be on the inner surface of the palm of the hand.

[3] Instead of Bhaga, the RV version mentions Pūṣan.

hand. Aśvins are asked, then, to carry Sūryā by a chariot to their house, to be a housewife, controlling everything and speaking with authority in the assembly[1] or sacrifice. On the forehead of the bride a piece of gold or golden ornament is tied. A yoke of a car is placed on a branch of a tree. A man holds it on one side. It is then tied to the branch of a tree. There is a hole in the yoke on both sides to adjust the horses or bulls yoked to it. The bride allows some water to pass through the hole on the other side of the yoke. So the spell is, 'weal to you be gold, waters, yoke poles and perforations of the yoke. Also weal be to you waters having hundred-fold cleaners. May your union with the husband be happy' (14. 1. 40). Indra is prayed to make the bride possessed of skin like the sun when she pours water in the hole in the yoke of the chariot, just like Apāla, who was purified by Indra by taking her through the holes of the chariot, the cart and the yoke[2] (14. 1. 41). The bride then stands on a slab of stone. In order to secure progeny, a pleasant and firm stone in the lap of the mother earth has been kept. Joyfully she is asked to stand on it. Savitṛ is called upon to grant long life to her (14. 1. 47.). Then the bride offers fried grains (*lājā*) in the fire. By offering the fried grains in the fire, she appeals to the gods to make her husband live long. The bridegroom then holds her hand. Just as Agni grasped the right hand of Pṛthivī, he is holding her hand and asks her not to be uncomfortable with him along with children and wealth (14. 1. 48.). Savitṛ is invoked to grasp her. Agni is prayed to make the bride happy and enjoying long life. The bride-groom holds the hand of the bride for good fortune, so that with him as her husband she may live long. Bhaga, Aryaman and Purandhi have given her to him for performing the duties of a house-wife. Bhaga and Savitṛ grasp her hand. The bridegroom declares, 'You are my wife. I am your lord' (14. 1. 49-51.). Bṛhaspati gave away the bride bringing prosperity. She is blessed to live hundred years with her husband (14. 1. 52.). The bridegroom takes the bride thrice round the fire. They go round the fire of Aryaman while the father-in-law and the brother-in-law keep on witnessing it (14. 1. 39 cd.). Seven lines are scratched to the north of the sacred fire. The couple treads on those seven lines in seven steps and the marriage takes place. She is then taken to a couch, which she mounts with favouring mind (14. 2. 31.). The couch on which she sits is not an ordinary one. Bhaga fashioned its four feet and also its four frame pieces. Tvaṣṭr adorned the straps in the middle. She is blessed to be of excellent omens (14. 1. 60.). When she is still sitting on the couch, the friends on both the sides wash her feet. Her waist-band is released. The priest, who releases her waist-band frees her.

[1] The word is *vidatha*. See BLOOMFIELD *JAOS*, 19, p. 12.

[2] For the story of Apāla, see Sāyaṇa on RV 8. 80. 7 and OERTEL *JAOS*, 18. p. 26

He admits that her fair form has struck him deeply on his mind. He is releasing her from the fetters of Varuṇa and thus himself becoming free from them (14. 1. 57). These bonds were tied by Savitṛ and untying them enables the newly wedded couple to have wide space and easy path (14. 1. 58). Among the attendants there arises a struggle to secure the garment, used by her as a waist-band. Those who become successful in the struggle get the garment. The bride is then dusted on her head with a fragrant powder of all scented herbs. Viśvedevas held her secure, when she was released by Bṛhaspati. By means of sprinkling of the scented powder, she is blessed to possess the splendour, brilliancy, fortune, glory, milk and essence of the cows in her house (14. 2. 53-58). The fragrance of all lotuses was gathered at the marriage of Sūryā (12. 1. 24). The bride then gets up from the couch. She is then preparing to proceed to the house of the bridegroom. The attendants are called upon to raise their weapons to smite away the demons. Dhātṛ has found a husband for her. Bhaga goes in front to lead her to her new house (14. 1. 59). While proceeding to her new house the bride is blessed to be of good omens and not killing her brother, or cattle, or husband (14. 1. 62). Homage is paid to Gandharvas, who are asked to go to their wives, the Apsarasas (14. 2. 35). Viśvāvasu, a Gandharva, is asked to seek her sister sitting with her father, as her elder sister is married (14. 2. 33).

The marriage rite is over. This is *vivāha*. Now there is the *udvāha* or the bridal procession to her husband's house. The bride and bridegroom mount a vehicle. Aśvins carried Sūryā in a vehicle along a road to their house (6. 82. 2). The bridal car is well decorated with flowers. It had got universal form. It had golden colour. It rolled well and had got good wheels. Sūryā then mounted the car to go to the world of the immortals to make her husbands happy (14. 1. 61).[1] The car had golden cushions (14. 2. 30).[2] The Atharvaṇic priest Brahmā, walked in front of the car. This ceremony is called *saurya*. It is also called *brāhma* since the *brahman* (spells of the Atharvaṇic priest) protects the couple on all sides. The *brahman* is yoked in the front, before, at the end, in the middle and everywhere (14. 1. 64). The same rite becomes *prājāpatya*, when all rites are celebrated without the utterance of the *mantras*.[3] The bridal couple starts on the journey. Their friends are beside them. The path is hoped to be free from thorns and straight (14. 1. 34). There should not be highway robbers to chase the couple. They should avoid a difficult path and follow an easy one (14. 2. 11). If another bridal procession goes along the same road, at the cross-roads, a skirting of the garment of the bride should be taken out and be thrown on the cross-roads and

[1] The RV version of this verse supplies *śālmali* a kind of tree for *vahatu*: bridal procession. It seems that the bridal car was made up of *śālmali* tree.

[2] Cf. the description of the chariot of Sūryā 14. 1. 6-15.

[3] See Kauśika 79. 31-33. This is meant for the Śūdras.

be stamped upon.[1] Homage is paid to Sūryā, Devas, Mitra and Varuṇa for securing the safe journey (14. 2. 46). The car, if needing repairs, is mended and made to go on smoothly (14. 2. 47). If on the way the couple had to ford a river, a clod of clay is thrown in it and then they cross it. They get an easy crossing across the water, well provided with drink. A pillar or any obstacle on the way is cleared off with the spell (14. 2. 6). On the way the bridal procession may meet a big tree, which is usually a residence of the Gandharvas and Apsarasas. They are praised to be pleasant to the bride and not to injure the bridal car as it is driven (14. 2. 9). It is likely that the bride, while going through the car, may catch some contamination of *yakṣma.* The priest uses a spell to remove *yakṣma* (disease) from the car and every limb of the bride (14. 2. 69). Women having crooked sights may come to look at the new bride. Also some evil-hearted young and old women may come to see her. These women are told that the bride is of excellent omen. They should come to her and see her. They should grant her good fortune and go away with evil one (14. 2. 28.) There may be a conjunction of rivers on the way. So the streams of water, herbs, fields, forests are called upon to protect the bride and bridegroom from the demon that may afflict them (14. 2. 7.) They may be sometimes required to go through a cremation ground. The deceased fathers, burnt there, who might come to see the bridal car are invoked to give protection and progeny to the couple (14. 2. 73.) The bride may sleep in the car on the way. She may be awakened to go to her own house, to be the mistress of the house. Savitṛ is called upon to grant long life to her (14. 2. 75). The bridal car comes near the house of the bridegroom. The house is invoked to look on the procession with friendly eye and not with terror. The Brahmā priest by means of his *brahman* causes all that is covered under the house to be of perfect beauty and Savitṛ is invoked to make that pleasant for the husband (14. 2. 12.) As soon as the car comes to the house of the bridegroom, it is sprinkled with water, which is invoked not to smite the pegs or pins of the yoke. Yoke-ropes are released. The two bulls are invoked not to bring evil and to free the couple from inauspiciousness (14. 2. 16). The new house is sprinkled with water by the bride to clear away all undesirable spirits. She overcomes them. Īdā is rebuked to go out of the house. Nirṛti and Arāti are chased to fly from that place and not to rest there (14. 2. 19). A slab of stone is kept on the southern side outside the house. On that a central *palāśa* leaf is kept. On that ghee and some *dūrvās* are placed. The bride is made to stand there (14. 1. 47). Stepping on that stone, the bride of excellent omens and possessing prosperity of houses, enters the new house to be propitious to her husband, father-in-law and

[1] *op. cit.* 71. 5.

mother-in-law (14. 2. 26). She is to watch her house as its mistress. Associating herself with her husband throughout, in advanced years, she would be able to speak with authority in the family gatherings and sacrificial sessions (14. 1. 21). The pillars of the new house are invoked not to injure the bride. The door of the divine house has made a pleasant path for the bride (14. 1. 63). With the *brahman* to guard her everywhere, she would shine up in the realm of her husband (14. 1. 64). She then enters the new house. The sacred fire is lighted. The bridegroom takes in his hand, the hand of the bride and goes round thrice the sacred fire.[1] The bride is asked to be pleasing, helpful and to control the houses, to bear heroes, and to love the gods,[2] with a favouring mind, with an eye not terrible and not killing the husband. Further she is asked to be propitious to the cattle, splendid, not slaying the brother-in-law or husband and to worship her householder's fire (14. 2. 17-18). She is to be propitious to the father-in-law, husband's houses and the people. After worshipping the householder's fire she pays homage to Sarasvatī and the fathers (14. 2. 20); and also to Mitra, Varuṇa and Devas (14. 2. 46). A red hide of a bull is spread over on the ground. Rushes are scattered on it. The bride sits on it. The red hide of a bull is her protection and defence and a mat to sit upon. Sinīvāli is invoked to bless her with progeny along with the favour of Bhaga (14. 2. 21). The bride, who is blessed to bear good progeny mounts on the hide, which is spread over with the rushes (14. 2. 22). Sitting on the rushes, on the red hide, she worships the fire (14. 2. 23). She sits on the mat of rushes facing east by the fire. Gods thus worshipped kill all demons. As a prospective mother, a son of a Brāhmaṇa is made to sit on her lap. She is then asked to give birth to progeny for her husband. And supposing the son of a Brāhmaṇa on her lap, to be her own son, she is blessed to have the son of good heritage (14. 2. 24). She is also blessed to be a mother of a number of babies (14. 2. 25). Both the bride and the bridegroom, give offerings to Agni for whom the Gandharvas carried about Sūryā together with the bridal car, and who is praised to give wife to the bridegroom (14. 2. 1.). Agni gives back the bride to her husband to enjoy life for hundred years (14. 2. 2.). She is firstly the wife of Soma and then of Gandharvas. Agni is her third husband and the human husband is the fourth (14. 2. 3). Soma gave her to Gandharva who gave her to Agni who with wealth and progeny gave her to her human husband (14. 2. 4). The waters, numbering seven are invoked and prayed to relieve the couple from distress (14. 2. 45). Thus the rites of *Udvāha* are over.

[1] See Kauśika 77. 22.

[2] S.P.P.'s edition reads *devṛkāmā*. Pandit SATAVALEKAR's edition reads *devakāmā*. RV 10. 85. 44 reads *devakāmā*, so also PPP 14. 17. But PPP 14. 18 reads *devṛkāmā*. For further details see SATAVALEKAR's edition, introduction, pp. 8-11.

The third rite is the rite on the fourth day (*garbhādhāna*). The bride and bridegroom offer rice grains in the marriage-fire. They anoint their eyes with collyrium. The Brahmā priest makes them sit on a bed. With pleasant mind, the bride is addressed, to sit on the bed and bear children for her husband (14. 2. 31). The couple sleeps there. The priest points out that the gods in the beginning, slept with their wives, they embraced their bodies with their own. The woman is addressed to be like Sūryā, who was possessed of all forms and greatness and to unite with her husband (14. 2. 32). The couple is called upon to come together in due season and to be the father and mother of the son. As a man a young woman, the husband is to mount her and produce progeny (14. 2. 37). Mounting the thigh, the husband is asked to touch with his hand the part below the navel of the bride. Savitṛ is addressed to make them live long. (14. 2. 39). The woman is like an animated field. The husband is called upon to scatter his seed in her. She would give birth to the progeny from her belly, bearing the exuded sperm of the male (12. 2. 14). Indra is invoked to push the couple like two *cakravāka* birds (14. 2. 64). Then they enjoy each other's company. The husband addresses her, 'I am the man, you are the girl. I am *sāman*, you are *ṛc*. I am the heaven, you are the earth'. Thus they come together to generate progeny (14. 2. 71). Unmarried men desire to wed and the liberal (i.e., rich) seek a son. Thus the bridegroom longs to be her companion for long life (14. 2. 72). The bridegroom finds his wife to be all the more attractive. He prays Aśvins that the flood of splendour in the thighs of a courtesan or in the strong wine or dice should enter in his wife[1] (14. 1. 36). The next morning the bride gets up from her bed (14. 2. 43). The bride and bridegroom put on new garments (14. 1. 45, 53). The bride is then adorned. Bṛhaspati first arranged hair on the head of Sūryā. With the shoots of *darbhas*, the bride is adorned for her husband, in the same way as Sūryā (14. 1. 55). The bride looks charming. The bridegroom thinks, 'This is the lovely form which my wife has put on. I desire to look at my wife moving about. I long to look on my wife coming near me. I will go after her with my friends, the Navagvas.[2] The dowry is divided between themselves by the couple.[3] The garment worn by the bride on the nuptial night is given to the priest. The garment is called *śāmulya*, which is supposed to be extremely ill-omened, and it is given away to a Brāhmaṇa along with some money. The garment, if retained in the house becomes a walking

[1] He prays that all attractions, which the seductive things possess should be possessed by her. *Mahānagni* is the great naked woman. She is courtesan.

[2] These are the Āṅgirasas. 'They are a mystic race related to Aṅgiras'. See MACDONELL and KEITH, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 437.

[3] See Kauśika 79. 17.

witchcraft and enters the husband as a wife.[1] It becomes blue-red It is clearly infested with *kṛtyā*. Her relatives thrive and the husband is bound in bounds[2] (14. 2. 26). If the husband touches that garment his body becomes impure (14. 1. 27). Thus the impure and soiled garment must be given to a Brāhmaṇa, who deserves it, for he alone can remove its evil effects. Sūryā wears the form which is stained with blood in butchering and cutting up the limbs and joints.[3] The garment is sharp and poisoned. Brahman (Atharvaṇic priest), who knows Sūryā deserves the garment (14. 1. 29). Brahman takes the garment, pleasant and well-omened to him. He goes over the expiation which does him no harm (14. 1. 30). The garment (bride's garment and dress) is given to Brahman, the Atharvaṇic priest, by gods along with Manu. By giving those garments to Brahman, one kills the demons residing in the bed (14. 1. 41). It is in fact the share of Brahman (14. 2. 42). He then hangs the garment on a pillar. Black, blue, brown and red spots go away from the garment. A female demon Pṛṣātakī consumes the spots when it is fastened on the pillar by the priest (14. 2. 49). The Atharvaṇic priest causes to sit on the pillar all witchcrafts in the outer garment, and the fetters of Varuṇa (14. 2. 49). He covers a tree, nearby with the garment. The priest's body trembles at the sight of the garment. The inner knot of the garment is thus handed over to the tree, which would free him from any harm or danger (14. 2. 50). The priest takes bath (14. 2. 45). The priest then puts on that garment. The skirts, edges, webs and lines on the garment woven by the women would now touch his body pleasantly (14. 2. 51). The priest, clothing himself anew, fragrant, well dressed, has risen alive and has been released from all sin (14. 2. 44). The priest then goes to his house.

Sometimes when the bride leaves the house of her father, women may weep and cause distress. To avert their evil effects, offerings of ghee are poured in the fire as an expiatory rite. These women with loose hair bewail the living ones.[4] If some hairy people have danced together in the house of her father, doing evil with

[1] See WHITNEY, *Atharvaveda*, p. 745. *Śāmulya* is explained by Sāyaṇa on RV 10. 85. 29 as the garment soiled by use on the body.

[2] The garment has become blue-red due to the stains of blood on it. Sāyaṇa on RV 10. 85. 28, refers this as the colour of the *kṛtyā* which sticks to the garment.

[3] The words are *āśasana*, *viśasana* and *adhivikartana*. WEBER and St. Petersberg Dictionary refer them to be the parts of the body of the animal that has been slaughtered for festival. Sāyaṇa explains these (10. 85. 35) as the boarder cloth, head cloth and divided skirt. Thus there are two views in the interpretation. One like WHITNEY consider that the garment is blood stained and the Brāhmaṇa alone can purify it, as he does in the act of cutting and killing the victim in the sacrifice. Sāyaṇa and WILSON consider that the reference is to the beautiful dress of the bride.

[4] *Sāṅkhyāyana gṛhya sūtra* (1. 15. 2.) considers the possibility of the bride weeping on leaving the father's house.

wailing, Agni and Indra are called upon to release the bride's father. Similarly his daughter with loose hair might have wailed in his house and committed sin. Also the bride's sisters or young women might have wailed in the house, or any sin done by sinners might have been settled in the progeny, cattle and houses of the father of the bride, Agni and Savitṛ are invoked to release him from that sin (14. 2. 59-62).[1]

Thus the marriage of Sūryā, the daughter of Savitṛ with Aśvins, is the background for the Atharvaṇic practice of what Kauśika calls a *Saurya* marriage. The marriage of Sūryā is an ideal before the Atharvavedins. The marriage rites of the Atharvavedins are divided in three parts viz. *vivāha, udvāha* and *caturthikākarma*. In the *vivāha* it is told that a part of the friends of the prospective bridegroom with Brahman priest go in a search of a bride. They praise the qualities of the bridegroom. The marriage is settled. The bridegroom with his friends comes to the house of the bride. The bride is worshipping fire. She is Sūryā, whose praises she utters while offering oblations in fire. The bride escorted by the priests goes to bring water used for the sacramental purposes. She takes bath and brings a jar full of water. Offerings to Aryaman are made. Her hair are plaited. Again she is given bath with hot water. The garment used for drying her body after the bath is given to persons, who escorted her. She is dressed in new garments. Upper garment is put like an *yajñopavīta*. Her hair are combed. Her waist is girded with a piece of cloth. A bead of *madhu* tree is tied in her *anāmikā* finger. The bride comes out of *kautukagṛha*. On her forehead a golden ornament is tied. She is tied to a yoke of a cart, with *darbha* grass. She then pours water in the hole of the yoke-pin. She stands on a piece of stone. Then she offers oblations of ghee in fire. The bridegroom takes her hand and goes thrice round the fire. The couple then treads on seven lines, in seven steps. She then sits on a couch. Her waist band is released. Fragrant dust of all scented herbs is showered on her. Then she proceeds to go with her husband to his home. This is *udvāha*. In an excellent chariot, avoiding all inauspicious things she comes to the house of the bridegroom. The new house is sprinkled with water by her. Stepping on a stone on the southern side of the house, she enters the new house. Sacred fire is lighted and she goes

[1] Cf. BLOOMFIELD, *JAOS*, Vol. XV, p. xliv 'women as mourners in the AV.' He considers that the practice of women mourning with their hair unloosened at the funeral of a deceased person might be in vogue in those days. A practice similar to that funeral dance may have been adopted among the Atharvavedins on the occasion of the bride's departure. These verses primarily belong to the funeral rites of the Vedic Indians. Some hysteric outburst by women at the departure of the bride is possible. But there does not seem to be any reference to the jubilation in the house by women and expiation thereof in these verses according to WEBER and ZIMMER in their translations of these hymns.

with her husband thrice round it. Red bull-hide is spread on the ground. The couple sitting on it worship the fire. The rites on the fourthday are called *caturthikākarma*. Kauśika 75-79 gives the employment of the verses of the 14th book, in the marriage rites. Almost all verses can be rightly understood with the help of Kauśika.

It seems that the marriageable persons were grown up persons and the Atharvaṇic rites fully indicate the advanced state of the society. These principal marriage rites are essentially the same in the other Vedas varying only in details.[1] Brahman, the Atharvaṇic priest plays an important part right from the choice of the bride to the end of the *caturthikākarma*. Stepping together seven steps, offering *lājās* (fried grains) and going round the fire thrice are the essential features of an Aryan marriage. Other details are peculiarly Atharvaṇic giving more importance to the bride than to the bridegroom. Highly erotic description of the bride and the rites of the 4th day indicate the genuine side of the human nature, exposed without a veil of religious rites. This is the Saurya marriage or marriage according to the fashion of Sūryā.

In the whole book a human bride is identified with Sūryā and Aśvins with a human husband. The marriage of Sūrya is symbolical of a human marriage. On the background of the marriage of Sūryā, the marriage rites are detailed. The choice of Sūryā as the bride (14. 1. 9), the bridal procession of Sūryā (14. 1. 10-22 and 14. 2. 30) the marriage garment given by Tvaṣṭṛ to Sūryā (14. 1. 53), Savitṛ blessing his daughter with long life (14. 1. 47), the bride being adorned like Sūryā (14. 1. 55cd), and Bṛhaspati first plaiting the hair of Sūryā (14. 1. 55ab), these and other references indicate that the Atharvaṇic poetess[2] is idealising, the marriage of Sūryā with Aśvins and is identifying the human bride with Sūryā.

## IV

## THE DEITIES RELATED TO YAMA AND THEIR WORLDS

In this chapter another son of Vivasvat is treated. In the Atharvaṇic religious system Yama, Mṛtyu and Pitṛs, the Fathers—occupy a very high place. Aṅgiras, Atharvan and Bhṛgu are the eminent Pitṛs and in the AV the worship of the Pitṛs naturally occupies a very high place. Yama is the first of the Pitṛs. It is thus very interesting to see what position Yama, Mṛtyu and the Pitṛs occupy in the Atharvaṇic mythology. The places of residence of the Pitṛs and incidently those of the gods, have been discussed in the fourth section of this chapter.

[1] See COLEBROOKE, *Miscellaneous Essays*, Vol. I, pp. 203-26, for the marriage rites according to SV and YV.

[2] Sūryā Sāvitrī is the seer of these hymns (14. 1, 2).

(1) Yama

The word Yama occurs 115 times in the AV. Yama is called Vaivasvat at five places. He is the son of Vivasvat. His mother is Saraṇyu, the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ. Tvaṣṭṛ offers his daughter Saraṇyu to the whole world of mortals and immortals. Vivasvat, a mortal seems to have attracted the mind of Tvaṣṭṛ. Sometime after their marriage Saraṇyu, being displeased with Vivasvat, runs away from him giving birth to the twins Yama and Yamī. Saraṇyu changes herself into a form of a mare to escape the attention of Vivasvat and goes to the gods who concealed her from the mortals, such as Vivasvat, Yama and Yamī. In order to make the matters still more safe, they construct a proto-type of Saraṇyu, Savarṇā (a proper name or an epithet), who took the place of Saraṇyu in all her relations with Vivasvat. Vivasvat begets Manu from Savarṇā.[1] But Vivasvat finds out the deception practised on him. He chases Savarṇyu, assuming the form of a horse. He begets from her the Aśvins. Saraṇyu abandons them also, as she had done previously Yama and Yamī.[2] In this story Yama has been suggested to be a mortal. But elsewhere he is actually described as a mortal. He was the first mortal to die and a mortal who went to the other world first. He gathered people round him (18. 3. 13). He found out a path to the other world (18. 1. 50). He was the first to attain to the slope of the heaven, and to observe road for many to come after him (6. 28. 3). He being the first mortal to die, there was no trace of life in the other world where he went after his death. He died and found out the path for the innumerable mortals to come after him. When Yama went to the other world, he established himself in the mid-air (*antarikṣa*). After him all deceased persons in this world went there. Yama became their king (18. 1. 49). He became the sole master of all bipeds and quadrupeds (6. 28. 3). Yama has a palatial residence in the other world. It was offered to him by the five clans of men (18. 4. 55). Yama favours the prayers offered by the poet and is himself the poet of the fathers. (18. 3. 63). Thus whosoever departs from this world becomes a Pitṛ, one of the Fathers and is ruled by Yama, the king. Yama is the lord of the Pitṛs (5. 24. 14). Yet he is only the seniormost Pitṛ (11. 6. 11). The bones of a man, who is cremated, are buried under a tree. The tree is asked to free the departed man to go to the seat of Yama, so that he may enjoy the assembly of Yama (18. 3. 70). Thus Yama behaves with his followers, who flock

[1] Manu is called a son of Vivasvat in AV 8. 10. 24.

[2] This story has been constructed from the two passages occurring in 18. 2. 33 and 18. 1. 53. The latter occurs in RV 10. 17. 1, with slight variation. The former verse is Atharvanic. For the story see, Bloomfield, *JAOS*, Vol. 15, pp. 172-188. There is no mention of the identification of Vivasvat with the sun.

round about him, very gently and lovingly. There is no mention of torture in the realm of Yama. But the residents of the realm of Yama were taxed, if they had not performed sacrificial rites and other secular pious deeds (*iṣṭāpūrta*). The councillors of Yama, who were also kings, charge one sixteenth of their merit of their sacrificial and worldly pious deeds as a tax to enter their world. Thus these prospective Pitṛs have to give one sixteenth part of their *iṣṭāpūrta* to the kings, the advisers of Yama. However, the new entrants in that world were exempted from the tax on their *iṣṭāpūrta*, if they had performed an Atharvaṇic sacrifice such as the *aviṡava*. The kings share among themselves the tax they collect (3. 29. 1). Thus the performance of the Atharvaṇic *sava* sacrifices enables the departed persons to get immunity from taxation at the hands of the members of the assembly of Yama.

Yama has a horse, of dark brown colour. Its face is red as if it were being sprinkled with lac (5. 5. 8).

Sleep comes to the world of the mortals from the realm of Yama (19. 56. 1). Sleep is the child of Yama and Varuṇānī (6. 46. 1). Sleep is the agent of Yama (19. 59. 1, 6. 46. 1). Likewise, death, the elder brother of sleep comes from him only. Yama sends his messengers (*dūtas*) to catch hold of the mortals and bring them to his realm after their death (8. 2. 11). Two messengers of Yama come to take away the life of a dying man (5. 30. 6). These messengers have broad nose and colour like copper. They feed on the lives of the dying men (18. 2. 13). Along with these two messengers, the departed person begins his journey, to the realm of Yama. On the way there are two dogs, having four eyes, having dark and spotted complexion, defending the path and looking at the new entrants in the realm of Yama (8. 1. 9, 18. 2. 12). Yama has been identified with Nirṛti, the goddess of destruction. She has also two messengers, dove and owl. Their appearance is inauspicious and is indicative of the forthcoming death in the house (6. 29. 3).

Yama is naturally invoked at the rite of the cremation of the dead and his journey in the other world. Life banishes the dead man from his house. He is carried outside the village. Death, the kind messenger of Yama leads him to the Pitṛs (18. 2. 27). Yama admits the new Pitṛ and says, 'I give him a resting place. He has come to me and become mine here' (18. 2. 37). The two carriers convey the dead from the house to the cremation ground. With them he goes to the house and assemblies of Yama (18. 2. 56). A garment[1] is given to the dead, to put on. Wearing it, he goes to the world of Yama (18. 4. 31). The dying man loses his breath, expiration, outgoing breath, and thus loses his life. But when he reaches the world of Yama, he gets back his life and eyes to see the

[1] This is the garment in which the dead body is wrapped.

sun (18. 2. 46). The deceased man finds home among the Fathers and thrives there (18. 2. 25). The grains of rice offered at the cremation sacrifice become cow and sesames become calf. Thus enriched by the milk of this cow he lives unexhausted in the world of Yama (18. 4. 32). The dead man, thus admitted in the region of Yama unites himself with the Fathers, Yama and his sacred and charitable work. In the highest heaven, he becomes free from the reproachable things and assumes a resplendant body (18. 3. 58). This effect in the realm of Yama the heaven, is achieved by a rite at the time of burying the relics of bones in the ground, and throwing a clod of earth on the joint of the bones (18. 3. 52). At the cremation rite Yama is invoked to come and take seat on the mat of *darbhas*. He comes there with the Āṅgirasas,[1] the Fathers (18. 1. 60).

The fire, which consumes the dead is called *kravyād*. After the cremation, this fire is to be extinguished. It is Yama's fire. By means of the offerings of withered cane, of *tilpinjas* and reeds the funeral fire is extinguished.

Yama is a kind-hearted king of the other world, yet none desires voluntarily to go in his realm. Thus the Atharvaṇic poets repeatedly invoke Yama to grant long life for them and spare them. The Antharvaṇic charms and spells bring back a person who is seriously ill or almost dead (8. 2. 11).

In a charm to thrust spinsterhood on a girl by her rival, king Yama is invoked to take the girl as his bride. She should not be married but remain in the house of her father and mother. All her splendour is withdrawn by her rival by means of an Atharvaṇic spell (1. 14. 1-2).[2] That girl is to be the house-keeper of Yama. She should sit with the Fathers (1. 14. 3).

The lunar mansion *mūla*[3] is called to be the two unfasteners of Yama. It has got a tail, the sting of which is named as *vicṛta*. A child born on this lunar mansion is inauspicious. An Atharvaṇic spell brings the child long life for hundred years (6. 110. 2). In the horrible charm called *bhāradvājapravṛkṣa* (Kauśika 47. 12), a staff is cut for use in a witchcraft rite to kill an opponent in religious performance. Along with the cutting of the staff the opponent is cut in his seven breaths and eight marrows. With Agni, the messenger, he is ordered to go to the place of Yama (2. 12. 7).

[1] Along with the holy Āṅgirasas, Vairūpas are also invited. They seem to be a sub-division of the Āṅgirasas. Cf. RV, 10. 14. 5 = AV, 18. 1. 59.

[2] There is difference of opinion regarding the interpretation of this hymn (1. 14). WEBER, LUDWIG and ZIMMER consider this to be a marriage hymn. BLOOMFIELD *JAOS*, 13, *CXV* considers with Kauśika 36. 15 to be charm of a woman against her rival. Also see *SBE*, XLII p. 252. But *pitṛṣu* in the hymn indicates the reference to Yama and the other word. So the unfortunate girl is to be dedicated to Yama.

[3] *Mūla* is scorpion, whose tail seems to be bifurcated. Sāyaṇa remarks that the lunar mansion, though one, on account of this position, there is dual number (*vicṛtau*).

When a farmer ploughs the field for sowing seeds, he commits a sin against Yama, by killing unknowingly a number of living creatures. The food which one eats is a result of such ploughing, hence one, who eats food also shares a sin against Yama. Yama is offered oblation to redeem one from the sin, and to make the food taste sweeter (6. 116. 1).[1]

Similarly Yama is invoked to free one from the sin, knowingly or unknowingly committed against father and mother (6. 116. 2). A person in debt is in the control of Yama. This debt may be the non-payment of what one owes in corn to others (6. 117. 1). Debt at the gambling house also is sought to be redeemed in the world of Yama. The creditor comes there with a rope to bind the debtor for the debt one owes to him (6. 118. 2).

Medicinal or magical herbs are invoked to free one from the fetters of Yama (19. 20. 1). A plant of universal powers drives away even the *piśācas* to the world of Yama (6. 32. 2).

Thus Yama does not spare any one from the sins or guilts committed in this world. He then assumes the role of a judge.

Offerings in various sacrifices secure the sacrificer the world of Yama, which is *svarga*. The offerings at *aṣṭakā* sacrifice, secures in the world of Yama, milk from cow, named *aṣṭakā* (3. 10. 1). By means of *viṣṭārin* offerings (rice mess having pools and channels filled with water, wine etc.), Yama does not rob the seed of the sacrificer. Owning a chariot, the sacrificer goes on a chariot-road. Becoming a bird he goes across the sky (4. 34. 4). He stays with Yama (4. 34. 3). By offering the *svargaudanasava*, the sacrificer and his wife become of the same age in the realm of Yama (12. 3. 1).

Thus the Atharvaṇic poets propogate the doctrine of the performance of *sava* sacrifices to be along with Yama. The highest fruit to be secured by means of such sacrifices is the *svarga*, full of joy and pleasures.

From the description of Yama, given above one can easily notice the stages in the conception of Yama. Yama is the first mortal to die and go to the other world. He rules the departed. He gives them residence, splendid body and all pleasures. Then one sees Yama as a stern ruler exacting stern laws of mortality. In another phase one sees in him the goal to be reached by the offerings in the *sava* sacrifices, propounded by the Atharvaṇic teachers.[2]

### (2) Mṛtyu

The word Mṛtyu occurs about 115 times in the AV. Thus Mṛtyu and Yama are referred to in equal number in the AV. Mṛtyu is the lord of all created beings and Yama is the lord of the Fathers

[1] See Bloomfield, *SBE*, XLII p. 457.

[2] For the concept of the Ṛgvedic Yama, see R. N. Dandekar, *B.C. Law Volume* Part I, pp. 194-209. Also see Ehni, Der *Videsche Myths des Yama.*

(5. 24. 13). They have two different fields of activity. Mṛtyu dominates the world of the living beings and Yama rules them when they die. But both of them deal with the life of the beings. Their functions are apparently the same. Mṛtyu is the kindly messenger of Yama (18. 2. 27). He takes away the life of a dying man to the Fathers, but he does this on the initiative of Yama. All bipeds and quadrupeds are subjected to his domination (8. 2. 23). But Mṛtyu is not unkind. He takes away the life of creatures, normally when they become old. The Atharvaṇic poets always pray that old age should be the cause of Death (8. 2. 11). But all creatures do not live up to old age. Hence there are various types of Mṛtyus. They are mentioned to be 1000 (6. 63. 3), or 101 (8. 2. 27), or 100 (1. 30. 3). These are all other deaths i e. other than normal one, due to old age (*jarāmṛtyu*). Mṛtyu ties the dying man to an iron pillar (6. 63. 3), by means of fetters (8. 8. 10, 8. 1. 1) so that he may not escape his clutches. A creature, when born is destined to die by a particular type of death, normally in old age, but in abnormal conditions by means of *yakṣma* and others (5. 30. 7). The gods, like men, were mortals first, and as such were subjected to Mṛtyu. But they overcame death by means of celebacy and penance (11. 5. 19). The gods go to the other world by a path known as *devayāna* and a dead man, a prospective Pitṛ by means of a path known as *pitṛyāṇa.* Ultimately they reach the same place. When a person dies premature due to accident, disease or in battle, the messengers of Mṛtyu and Yama are felt to be wicked (8. 8. 10); otherwise, when one is relieved of the pangs of old age, they are felt to be kind (18. 2. 27). Thus the gods are always invoked to spare the dying man from hundred deaths, other than the one due to old age (1. 30. 3).

Yama is identified with Mṛtyu and sometimes independently mentioned. Mṛtyu is mentioned with Soma, Varuṇa and Mahādeva. Yama is not mentioned here (5. 21. 12).

Yama and Mṛtyu are both mentioned to have first attained the slope of the heaven and spied road for many bipeds and quadrupeds (6. 28. 3.)

The messengers of Mṛtyu, who take away the life of a person are the missiles of god. A person is hit by these missiles of the angry gods and is no more. Thus abnormal death is brought about by the wrath of the gods, represented by these missiles, and seen in the form of diseases. The dying man feels that he is going through mist. He becomes unconscious and cannot see or feel anything. He feels like going down in the mist (8. 2. 9). It is also not a straight road, but a round about and crooked one (*abhivhāra*, 6. 76. 3). It is full of profound darkness (5. 30. 11). When the course of the dead man, begins to the other world, he goes upwards along the path, which is swept by wind. The departed seers twenty-one times

attempted to bear back death with the fetters fastened to their feet. Going up, they stepped on the lower heights and went up (12. 2. 29). The sight and breath of the dying man vanish (8. 2. 4). Nirṛti helps Mṛtyu in his function of taking away the life of the creatures (3. 6. 5).

Prāṇa is identified with Mṛtyu (11. 4. 11). Indra is greater than Mṛtyu (13. 8. 1). Virāj is Mṛtyu (9. 10. 24). Sleep or dream is an instrument of Yama and is Antaka and Mṛtyu (6. 46. 2). Ka or Vena has Mṛtyu (Death) and Amṛta (Immortality) as his shadows. (4. 2. 2). Mṛtyu and Amṛta rest in the Brahman (10. 2. 14) and in Skambha (10. 7. 15). Thus in the philosophical hymns of the AV, Mṛtyu and Amṛta or Death and Immortality form the shadow of the Highest Being. They do not exist independently but go together with the Highest Spirit. A person knowing the Brahman is not afraid of Mṛtyu (10. 8. 44). The worship of Sūrya also drives away all fetters of Mṛtyu (17. 1. 19). The Atharvaṇic philosophy teaches one not to be afraid of Mṛtyu, who is an aspect of the Highest Being.

These philosophical ideas seem to be later than the teaching of the AV regarding the *sava*-sacrifices. The offering of *svargaudana-sava* enables one to secure death only in old age and to meet the fruit of the sacrificial offerings in the next world (12. 3. 55-60). Thus the Atharvaṇic poets lay down different *savas*, by the performance of which the sacrificer gets over premature death, dies in old age only and secures pleasures in the heaven. In a *sava* called *atimṛtyu* by Kauśika (66. 11), cooked rice is offered in sacrifice and the sacrificer overcomes premature death (4. 35).

Mṛtyu confers benedictions and maledictions, favours and disfavours (6. 13. 2).

At the coronation of a king, Mṛtyu is present. Mṛtyu represents the deceased ancestors of the king and his sanction to the ceremony is sought to show that the Pitṛs are in its favour (4. 8. 1). On the battle-field Mṛtyu has his fair play. He spreads the fetters which are nothing but the traps to catch the enemy (8. 8. 16). In a magical rite to kill an adversary, a stick is cut to symbolise the death and a girdle is tied round the waist to symbolise the fetters of Death. This girdle is the devout student of Mṛtyu (6. 133. 3). The contention of the Atharvaṇic poets is that a man must live till old age and death must not hover round him in any form. They use spells to avert the premature death. Prāṇāpānas are invoked to protect one from Death (2. 16. 1). Aśvins bear back Death, which is a curse (7. 53. 1). A rival practitioner of witchcraft offers sacrifice with mind, speech and *yaju* texts, and sends away Death to kill the intended person, but Mṛtyu is asked to smite the offering before it reaches the person. Thus the witchcraft practitioners win success over the Death (7. 10. 1). By means of spells the Atharvaṇic priest can hand over

to Death the person, who cursed him with or without his curses to him. Thus Brahman with his spell brings about the death of an undesirable person (6. 37. 7). *Trivṛt* amulet, with a single syllable, *oṁ*, drives off Mṛtyu (5. 28. 8). The *brahman* (spell) is powerful enough to cast the enemy to Death (5. 8. 5). Death due to *yakṣma* (a disease) can be averted by means of a spell (12. 2. 2-3).

Magic and medicine help to ward off Death. *Varaṇamaṇi* saves the wearer from the weapons of Death. (10. 3. 7). The herbs called *sahasraparṇī* or *sahasravīryā* remove Death and there is no occasion for the women with dishevelled locks of evil-wailers to wail for the dead person (8. 7. 13, 8. 1. 18-19). Thus the Atharvaṇic poets believe that the herbs enable the dying person to pass off Death (8. 1. 17). Even when a person is on the point of dying, Brahman warns Death, that he is treating him with medicine and as such he must live and that it should not kill him (3. 11. 2, 8. 2. 5). He comforts the dying man and prays Mṛtyu that the dying man should rise up with all his limbs safe and uninjured, and that he should live for hundred years (8. 2. 8). Mṛtyu attacks a person who violates code of civility. A person urinating while standing, commits a sin against Mṛtyu (7. 102. 1).

Thus the Atharvaṇic poets had an ardent desire to overcome Mṛtyu by means of their spells and medicine. They hoped to overcome death by means of the sorcerers, roots of plants and incantations which cause Mṛtyu (6. 13. 3). Mṛtyu sometimes attacks a newly born child with his fetters. But a spell addressed to Bṛhaspati saves the child from death (3. 11. 8). A dying person is blown with the breath of the witchcraft practitioner and he recovers his sight and breath (8. 2. 4). The Brahman uses his spell (*brahman*) to bring back a person almost dead from the road leading to the other world (8. 2. 9). Yama hands over the dying person to the Brahman (priest) (6. 63. 2). A Kṣatriya to get security from death gives offerings in Agni (6. 76. 3).

Mṛtyu is Antaka (8. 1. 1). Sometimes Antaka is the son of Mṛtyu.

Mṛtyu thus figures independently as an agent of Yama in this world. There is a natural craze of every person to escape from the clutches of Mṛtyu. The Atharvaṇic spells aim at lengthening the life of a dying person by means of magic and medicine. Of course, Atharvaṇic poets realise that only premature death can be overcome by means of these spells. Death due to old age, is the natural course. However by knowing the Brahman one can overcome this kind of death also.

### (3) PITṚS

The word Pitṛ occurs about 300 times in the AV. About 125 times it occurs in singular and dual. About 175 times it occurs in

plural, where it means the Fathers. The eighteenth book of the AV deals with the Pitṛs. Out of 283 verses in the four hymns of the book about 150 are purely Atharvaṇic verses.[1] Thus more than half of the contents of the 18th book are the product of the Atharvaṇic poets. In the Atharvaṇic religion the Pitṛs occupy a very important position. Aṅgirasas, the founders of the Atharvaṇic tradition are the Pitṛs, loving Soma (2. 12. 4). Thus Pitṛ-worship, as an aspect of the Atharvaṇic religion must have been started out of regard for Aṅgirasas, the Fathers.

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FATHERS

Yama is the lord of the Pitṛs (11. 8. 11). Yama first found out a road along which our former forefathers went forth (18. 1. 50). A dead man is a prospective Pitṛ. The Pitṛs take the dead man to the house of Yama. Thus Yama is the king and the Pitṛs are the subjects (5. 30. 2). For the dead men, the Pitṛs have made the world of Yama which is adorned with days, waters, rays and residences which Yama allots to them (18. 1. 55). The dead person after leaving this mortal world goes along the road, by which his forefathers went. He sees there Yama and Varuṇa (18. 1. 54).

Gods were mortals like men. Due to blessings of Agni or Rohita they obtained immortality (14. 1. 7). They did not die. Having attained immortality they went to the heaven or *svarga*. This path leading to the heaven is called *devayāna*. While men, mortal as they are, had to die prematurely, due to diseases or accidents etc., or naturally owing to old age (*jarāmṛtyu*). They after death went also to *dyauḥ* or *svarga*. But their path is called *pitṛyāṇa*. After their admission in the heaven, there does not seem to be any distinction between them. The gods as well as Pitṛs stayed in the heaven. The gods had fathers and sons like ordinary mortals (1. 30. 2). In the heaven the gods are like Pitṛs and the Pitṛs are like gods (6. 123. 3). The word *deva* means a luminous one.[2] The Pitṛs are also bright and luminous (*dyumantaḥ*, 18. 1. 56-57). They are beneficient (18. 1. 45).

A dead person becoming a Pitṛ, goes to the world of the Pitṛs by a road, not beset with enemies, with his *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*, (vital breaths), his life and eye-sight and mind (18. 2. 46, 8. 1. 7). Thus as one of the Fathers, he is endowed with life, sight and all pleasures of the heaven. The life in the world of Pitṛs is the continuation, in the most prosperous and splendid form of the life on this world.

The dead persons were disposed of in many ways. They were buried (*nikhāla*), or scattered away (*paropta*), or burnt, or exposed

[1] These are as follows: 1st hymn 5, 2nd hymn 35, 3rd hymn 38 and 4th hymn 72. [2] Cf. *Nirukta* 7. 15.

on a high place (*udhita*). Thus the Pitṛs are classified according to the manner in which they were disposed of in this world. Whatever may be their way of disposal, they all become the Pitṛs (18. 2. 34). They may be burnt with fire or not burnt, they all revel as they like in the midst of the heaven (18. 2. 35). They may be unmarried, or married yet childless, and working hard,—they all go to heaven and find a place, shining on the back of the heaven (18. 2. 47). Thus all dead men enjoy a complete and prosperous life in the heaven, as the Pitṛs. They look with favour on their descendants in this world. They are gifted with body, sight and mind. The Atharvaṇic conception of *yama-rājya* in the world of Pitṛs is very generous. The gods and Pitṛs alike enjoy the heavens. As will be shown later the Atharvaṇic poets believe that the attainment of heaven as Pitṛs is facilitated by the performance of some sacrifices called *savas*.

The worship of the Pitṛs every month is greatly stressed in the Atharvaṇic religion. A story is told to this effect. Virāj came to the Pitṛs, who killed her. In a month she came again into being. Therefore to the Fathers, they give in a month, monthly oblation. He, who understands this goes along the road that leads to the Fathers (8. 10. 19). When the Fathers came down for receiving worship at the hands of their descendants, some barbarians, it is complained, enter among the Pitṛs, having faces of acquaintances. They go about eating what is not sacrificed. They bear subtle and gross bodies. Agni is called upon to blast them. Thus *dasyus* (barbarians) after death, would not be the Pitṛs. They cannot get the privilege of being the worthy Pitṛs of the Aryans (18. 2. 28.) The Pitṛs are sinless in their world (6. 117. 3.)

Savitṛ is specially interested in the Pitṛs and their comforts. He impelled the first father height and width (7. 14. 3.) This household god is prayed to assign treasure, dexterity and lifetime to the Fathers (6. 14. 4.)

The Pitṛs are divided into two groups as higher and lower, the Fathers and Grandfathers (5. 24. 15-17).[1] The Fathers have prominently among them the Atris, Aṅgirasas, and Navagvas, who were rich in sacrificial gifts, who performed sacrifices, and who did many pious deeds (18. 3. 20). The Pitṛs are referred to as our old distant Pitṛs, the ancient ones, who sharpened the *ṛta*, who shone up brightly, praising songs, and who split up the ground to uncover the ruddy ones, the cows or the dawns which Āṅgirasas brought back from the Paṇis (18. 3. 21). In the list of the ancient Fathers, following figure prominently. Kaṇva, Kakṣīvat, Purumīḍha, Agastya, Śyāvāśva, Obhari, Arcanānas, Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, Atri, Kaśyapa,

[1] RV 10. 15. 1 (= AV 18. 1. 44) divides them as lower, higher and middle. They attained life, unharmed and knowing the *ṛta*. Also RV 10. 14. 3 (= AV 18. 1. 47) refers to Mālati with Kavyas, Yama with Āṅgirasas, and Bṛhaspati with Ṛkvas, who increase the gods, who are increased by the pitṛs.

Vāmadeva, Vasiṣtha, Gotama, and Bharadvāja. They are the praiseworthy Fathers, who are invoked to be gracious to the worshipper (18. 3. 15-16.) The Āṅgirasas as Pitṛs, are highly praised as of good actions, pious heavenly ones and forging the generations (18. 3. 32.) The Fathers are described as truthful, eating and drinking oblations and going in alliance with the gods and Indra (18. 3. 48). The Fathers receive the offering of ghee through Sarasvatī, who is their mouth (7. 68. 2). The seers in this world after their death ascend to the highest heaven, without being afraid, on account of the offerings to Agni in this world (18. 3. 64). The offering of a goat with five dishes of cooked rice gives light to the Fathers to smite away all darkness on way to the heaven (9. 5. 11). The three fires burning the dead body, ascend to their birth place (the mid-air) by the road, by which the Fathers travel (18. 4. 1). With sacrifices, the sacrificial implements, ladles, *puroḍāśa,* and the gods invoked in the sacrifice, the dead ones go along the road, which the gods used for travelling (*devayāna*) and by which those that have offered sacrifice go to *svarga* (18. 4. 2). This is the road of the *ṛta* (the Eternal Law), by which the Āṅgirasas went to *svarga*, where Ādityas feed on honey (18. 4. 3). The Fathers thus come by the *pitṛyāṇa* which is profound. After enjoying the monthly offerings they go by the path leading to their city (18. 4. 63). Newly admitted member in the world of the Pitṛs is taken there by the forerunners and former Fathers, who went by the ancient path (18. 4. 44). As Agni burns up the dead, he knows all Fathers that have gone to distant places (18. 4. 41). Hundred, thousand streamed fountain is situated unexhausted on the back of the sea (mid-air) yielding refreshments to the Fathers (18.4.36).

It is thus clear that the dead person began his journey upwards in the sky. The Āṅgirasas and other Pitṛs ascended to the back of the sky, like *Bhūrjis.* So the new entrant in the *pitṛloka* gets a place, according to his position. There are three heavens, the lowest, the middle and the highest. The lowest is watery heaven (*udanvati*), the middle is full of stars (*pīlumati*) and third is the excellent. (*Pradyauḥ*) These three heavens are meant, according to MAX MULLER for the Father, Grand-father and Great-grand-father.[1] But it seems that these are the three divisions of the heaven, which are the same as the *pitṛloka* and are based on the merits of a person admitted therein. A performer of grand sacrifices is given place in the third or the highest heaven. On the whole, the Pitṛs can be said to inhabit a wide atmosphere ranging upto the highest heaven (18. 2. 49). The Fathers enjoy their stay in the heaven. They are pleased with their splendour and grandeur. They are quick poets also and become recepients of invitation at the sacrifices (18. 3. 79). Therefore the Pitṛs hope not to fall down from the world of the Fathers (6. 120. 2).

The fire which consumes the dead body is called the *kravyād*

[1] *India—What can it teach us*, p. 223.

(flesh eating fire). It is praised to be active and asked to go along with the dead by the path-leading to the world of the Pitṛs. The fire is charged with the duty to watch the Fathers (12. 2. 10). After the death, the *krāvyad* and *gārhapatya* fires are separated. The *kravyād* Agni is taken for the offerings to the Fathers (12. 2. 7).

The Pitṛs form a class of beings mentioned among the gods, men (10. 6. 32), Asuras and seers (10. 10. 26).

The Fathers fasten on a person in this world, sin coming from his father, mother, brother and thought. Thus the Fathers see that the ancestral sin is expiated by the person in this world. Otherwise they become angry (6. 116. 3). The food which one eats and on which his whole life depends, comes to him as a result of what is offered at the sacrifice or outside the sacrifice by him and is given to him by the Pitṛs. The Pitṛs thus carry on the maintenance of a person in this world (6. 71. 2). This is peculiar Atharvaṇic conception that the life or maintenance of a person in the world is granted to him by the Pitṛs. Sāyaṇa while explaining the *ṛc* 6. 122. 2 points out that every person as soon as he is born is under the debt of the Pitṛs. He redeems their debt by continuing the race, by giving birth to progeny. The Fathers desire that the race of men should continue. The Fathers are invoked to secure success in the assembly. By this favour, speaker speaks pleasingly in the assembly (7. 12. 1). The Fathers grant all-round protection and long life to him (3. 27. 2). The world of the Pitṛs is the privilege of the pious and god-loving persons. Those, who hate the gods and injure the Brāhmaṇas can never go to the *pitṛloka* (5. 18. 3). The medicinal plants relieve one from all sins caused by performance of witchcraft in sacrifice, in the offerings given to the Pitṛs (10. 1. 11). *Viśāṇikā* (a horn of a deer or cow), a medicine against flux or flow of blood from the wound in the body arises from the root of the Pitṛs (6. 44. 3). In the marriage rites, the bride after worshipping the house-holder's fire, pays homage to the Pitṛs (14. 2. 20). The Pitṛs come to witness the bridal procession (14. 2. 73). In appeal to the heaven and earth to counteract malicious witchcraft against a rival worshipper, thrice eighty singers of Sāman, Ādityas, Vasus and Aṅgirasas are invoked to charge the rival worshipper with the anger of the gods, with the force of any power in the merit gained by the sacrificial and outside sacrifice offerings, made by the Pitṛs (2. 12. 4). There the *iṣṭāpūrta* of the Pitṛs is the power, by which the performer of the witchcraft can overthrow the malicious devices of his rival. In the sacrificial performances of the Atharvaṇic types (the *savas*), the goal that is to be secured is the permanent life in the world of the Pitṛs. The offering of white-footed goat with five cakes (4. 29. 4) and rice offering in Brahmaudana rite (11. 1. 19-28), point to the fact that the sacrificer offers these offerings to secure long life and prosperity in the world of the Pitṛs which is the *svarga*.

### (4) The Lokas in the Atharvaveda

Connected with the Atharvaṇic conception of Yama, Mṛtyu and the Pitṛs, is the problem about *svarga, naraka* and other *lokas*. *Loka* is a general term used in connection with this world and the next. The next world is inhabited by the gods and the departed souls. There are different paths used by both of them to reach the next world, viz., *devayāna* and *pitṛyāṇa*. *Devayāna* is the path of the gods leading to their world. *Pitṛyāna* is the path of the Pitṛs leading to their world. Sometimes the words *devaloka* and *pitṛloka* are used to denote their residence in the other world. The question that arises before our mind is that whether these two worlds *pitṛ* and *devalokas* are different or one. The AV casually mentions, only once the *narakaloka*. The AV does not give detailed description of the *narakaloka*.

The word *loka* occurs about 210 times in the AV.

This world, the earth, is called the world of the living beings (*jīvānāṁ lokaḥ* 2. 9. 1). The Atharvaṇic poet waxes eloquent on the greatness of this world as the source of all beings (13. 1).[1] This world belongs to Indra (8. 8. 8). This world is dearest to the gods (5. 30. 17). The individuals may die and go out of the world; yet the continuity of life is seen here. Hence this world is called *amṛta*, immortal (8. 1. 1). The persons living in this world are the children of the gods. Ten gods of old, born of gods, gave this world to their sons, whose descendants occupy it now (11. 8. 10). The people in this world are friendly towards each other, pious and jolly. They leave away their diseases and enjoy their life (3. 28. 5-6). Thus the attitude of the Atharvaṇic thinkers towards this world is quite optimistic. They consider this world as immortal as the next. There is no craze among the people to go to the next world, abandoning this world as early as they can, this world being full of sins. This ideology is completely absent in the AV. The Atharvaṇic thinkers call upon the people to enjoy this life in all its aspects. They face and counteract all blemishes of this life and attempt to overcome all obstacles in their own magical, medicinal and sacrificial ways. They believe that a man should enjoy full life in this world and be prepared to enjoy the same in the next world.

There are three prominent worlds, viz., *dyauḥ, pṛthivī* and *antarikṣa* (12. 3. 20). Sūrya occupies these worlds (8. 1. 1). There are also thirty-three worlds fashioned by Prajāpati (11. 3. 52). However, no detailed description of these worlds is found anywhere in the AV. The three worlds, are fashioned by some seers, who are styled as the makers of the worlds. They also prepared a track to reach them. The pious Āṅgirasas went along the path of *ṛta* to the heaven (14. 4. 3). In the cremation rite, eight offerings of *apūpa* (cake) and

[1] Also refer to V. S. Agrawala, *B.C. Law Volume*, Part I, pp. 368-76.

milk, drops (of water), flesh, curds, ghee, food, honey, water and sap are made to them. These makers of the worlds share the oblations with the gods, who stay there (18. 4. 16-24, 3. 25. 29). Also gods are said to have conquered the worlds by means of the thunderbolt, which Bṛhaspati fashioned (11. 10. 12). The Vrātya book (15th), mentions the pure worlds on the earth, in the atmosphere, and in the sky. It seems that each of the earth, atmosphere and heaven is subdivided into a number of worlds. The total number of the worlds would be thirty-three (15. 13).

It seems that the worlds in the atmosphere and sky are called the heaven (*svar*). A sacrificer, in this world, reaches to the *svar*, after his death. The gods reached the place without death, for they are immortal. Thus the next world is the world of the people, who perform pious deeds in this world, so that world is called *sukṛtasya loka*, which is the world of the immortals (14. 1. 61).[1] All these worlds in the sky are bright. Rohita encompasses all these worlds with his brightness (13. 2. 10). Thus they seem to be the regions round about the sun, who illumines them. On reaching the heaven naturally, the dead one enjoys the light and becomes bright. All dead persons go to the other world viz. heaven, irrespective of their acts here. The gods admit the new entrant into their world and present him to the other deities (12. 3. 36). The Fathers also stay there. The departed soul, ascends to the world of the Pitṛs and shines there (18. 3. 73). Yama dying first went to that world (13. 3. 13). But this *pitṛloka* and *svargaloka* are not different. The dead one ascends to the *svargaloka* (18. 3. 4). The Pitṛs made their world for the dead (18. 1. 55). The departed souls going to the heaven find out a place, shining on the back of the firmament (18. 2. 47). A sacrificer goes with all his sacrificial equipment to the world by which the gods travel, by which those that have offered sacrifices go (18. 4. 2).

As has been mentioned before the heaven itself is divided in three parts, the watery, the starry and the topmost (18. 2. 49).

Thus all gods and all dead persons, who subsequently become Pitṛs reside in the luminous heaven. They are all immortal there. Only distinction between these two classes who reside there, depend on the paths by which they reach one and the same world. There is no further specification of these paths as the paths of light and darkness as it is done in the Bhagavadgītā (8. 24-26). There is also no mention of the transmigration. Thus these ideas about the transmigration and the return of the departed to this world for further reaping the fruits of his actions, are all absent in the AV. The gods and Pitṛs are both immortal, enjoy the same life. Every one living in this world and departing after his death has the privilege of

[1] *PPP* reads *amṛtasya* for *sukṛtasya*.

enjoying the world of light (*svar*). Thus by the offering of a bull, the sacrificer ascends to the world of light (*svar*, 4. 11. 6). Similarly by offering a goat one reaches the heaven (4. 28. 3). Whatever sacrificial acts he has done or any charitable act he has done outside the sacrifice (*iṣṭāpūrta*) reach before the person in the heaven and become united with him (6. 123. 1). King Yama and the *iṣṭāpūrta* of a person stand firm in the heaven (6. 123. 5). Thus the office of justic-attached to Yama must have been originated from this. The *iṣṭāpūrta* of a person going ahead of the person is looked after by Yama in the heaven. When the quarters are arranged in the heaven, a world is set for the sacrificer (18. 4. 7). The *sukṛta* (pious deed) is collected, according to the AV, by the performances of the various *savas*, which ensures a place in the heaven. Even a non-performer of sacrifices, reaches the heaven. Only by the performance of sacrifices their place and dignity in that world is secured in advance.

A person, who has committed sin is bound by the snares of Varuṇa from head to foot. These snares are to be loosened; wild dreams are to be stopped and when all sins go away by means of charms of the Atharvaṇic poets, the person goes to the world of the pious people. Similarly if one is bound in wood, in earth, by means of a rope or a spell, Agni is prayed to relieve him so that he would go to the heaven. Similarly the sin of the birth on the *mūla* lunar mansion is to be expiated (6. 121). All debts in this world, are to be paid here only, lest the creditor would seek him even in the world of Yama after his death (6. 118. 2). Similarly the debt at the gambling house is to be paid here only. All promises are to be fulfilled here only (6. 119). All paths, *devayānas* and *pitṛyānas* for this person become free from debt (6. 117. 3). Thus expiation charms in the AV are intended to rectify the wrongs in the moral behaviour in the world and get him ready for the next world after his death. This is the moral equipment of the Atharvaṇikas for the next world.

The world of light (*svargaloka*), is full of all comforts and pleasures. The departed soul going to the heaven, changes his body variously, as he finds himself in another colour. His blackish colour goes away. He becomes a purified and shining Pitṛ (12. 3. 54). All diseases of the human bodies go away. His limbs are not damaged or hurt. His eye sight is perfect (6. 120. 3). Indra having made the world for the gods (7. 84. 2), yields milk in that world (4. 11. 4). That world is very pure and bright. The departed person has his generative organ with him unburnt by the funeral fire. In the heaven many women belong to him (4. 34. 2).[1] He lives with Yama, goes to the Devas and enjoys with the Gandharvas. Yama does not rob his generative vigour. Borne on his chariot he travels. Becoming a

[1] cf. *Svarge loke bahu straiṇaṁ eṣām.*

bird he goes across the heaven (4. 34. 3).[1] The *svargaloka* is full of nectar (*amṛta*). There is abundance of food and refreshment (18. 4. 4). There no tax is paid by the weak for the strong. There is equal opportunity for all (4. 28. 3). In the heaven the lakes of waters contain lotus plants having egg-shaped and hoof-shaped bulbs. All streams are swelling in honey. There are pools of ghee, banks of honey, having wine in the place of water, filled with milk, water and curds (4. 34. 5-6).[2] Thus the heaven is full of all those things, which are deficient in this world and every person after death has the privilege of enjoying all pleasures therein. For securing these pleasures, the Atharvaṇikas inform us to perform the *sava* sacrifices[3] and expiation rites; so that with *tapas* (penance) a man would go beyond old age and after his death enjoy the pleasures in the *svarga* (6. 122. 4). The Atharvaṇic poets say that the life of a person should be extended to the full in this world and when dead, he should go to the world of the pitṛs, which is *svarga* (12. 2. 45).

In the world of Yama, to the giver of Vaśā (barren) cow all desires yield. Likewise they call *naraka* for him, who keeps back the cow when asked for (14. 2. 36).

In the description of the *svargaloka*, it will be noticed that Yama is the custodian of the *iṣṭapūrta* of the people and that there is desire to go purified to the world of the pious. This latter fact may be responsible for the sternness and punishments in the world of Yama for the sinners which is an aspect of the world of Yama in the Purāṇic mythology.

## V

## THE EARTH AND THE HEAVEN

In the last section we saw that the Svargaloka was occupied by the Pitṛs and the gods. In this section the deities of the worlds such as Bhūmi, Pṛthivī and Dyāvāpṛthivī are treated. The AV. contains one excellent hymn addressed to Bhūmi. Such hymns are of rare occurrence in the AV. Pṛthivī means the same as Bhūmi, though there is a slight difference in their meaning, as has been shown later. Dyāvāpṛthivī is another deity related to both the heaven and the earth.

### (1) Pṛthivī and Bhūmi

The word Pṛthivī occurs about 275 times and Bhūmi about 135 times in the AV. Sometimes the word Pṛthivī occurs as an epithet of Bhūmi in the sense 'wide or broad'. Sometimes both words are used in one and the same verse in the sense of the earth.

[1] The sacrificer of *brahmaudana sava* gets these pleasures.

[2] The offerer of *viṣṭhārin* oblation gets these in the heaven.

[3] See Savas and Yajñas, See X.

One whole hymn (12. 1.) and a number of short hymns glorify the earth. The word Pṛthivī often occurs in association with the word Dyaus.[1]

The Brahman fashioned Bhūmi (10. 2. 25.) In Skaṁbha Bhūmi is fixed (10. 7. 12). Great truth (*satya*), formidable *ṛta*, consecration, penance, the *brahman* and sacrifice support Pṛthivi. The foundation of Pṛthivī is truth and religious practices (12. 1. 1). Atharvan, the seer of the hymn 6. 61, boasts that he seperated earth and heaven. He gave existence to them (6. 61. 2). She supports all (*visvaṁbharā*). She is a treasure of wealth (*vasudhāni*). She has golden breast. She is firm. She bears the universal fire (*vaiśvānara*, 12. 1. 6). She has manifold aspects[2] (1. 2. 1).

In the general scheme of universe, the world is threefold, earth, sky and heaven. Each one is threefold. The earth is thus threefold (4. 20. 2). Out of the three Pṛthivīs, Bhūmi is the best and highest (6. 21. 1). So a distinction is made between Pṛthivī and Bhūmi. Bhūmi is the best part of Pṛthivī. Nirṛti is also called as earth[3] (6. 84. 1). In spite of destruction (Nirṛti) on the earth, the earth does not perish. She is not afraid of any one (2. 15. 1). Four directions are mentioned as east, west, up and down (12. 1. 31) or also as front, back, above and below (12. 1. 32, 1. 11. 2, 12. 1. 4).

This great Pṛthivī is the mother (9. 10. 12). Dyaus is the father and Pṛthivī is the mother (2. 28. 4). She is the mistress of what is and what is to be (12. 1. 1). She is the wife of Parjanya also (12. 1. 12). She bears the embryo of all beings and bears all that breathes and stirs (12. 1. 4). She is the mother, producing all. She is the mother of herbs and is maintained by ordinances and is auspicious and pleasant (12. 1. 17).

Bhūmi is the source of water. The trembling firmaments and earth produced and fashioned water, which is ever fresh (1. 32. 3)[4] On her the waters flow ceaselessly day and night (12. 1. 9). Before Bhūmi assumed this form, she was water in the ocean. The sages, with their wonderful powers, followed her. Her immortal heart, enveloped with the Truth is in the highest heaven. It thus seems that Bhūmi was nothing but water in the beginning and that water was in the highest heaven (that is her immortal heart). It may be that the poet is referring here to the gaseous state, before she was turned into liquid form, from which the present solid form might have been evolved (12. 1. 8). When Bhūmi was solidified, she became the embryo of all existence. Forests grew over her. High mountains were formed on her. Thus she maintained various living

[1] See under Dyavapṛthivi or Rodasī.

[2] *Bhurivarpas*: 'of manifold designs'—GRIFFITH. *Rūpanāmaitat*—according to Sāyaṇa.

[3] Nirṛti or destruction is seen on the earth along with creation.

[4] See Sāyaṇa on this.

beings (22. 1. 17). The earth possesses all, is covered by heaven and rests on it (1. 32. 4). Thus Bhūmi depends on heaven. It is also pointed out that the Highest Brahman, that Universal form of what stirs, flies, stands and breathes, sustains Pṛthivī (10. 8. 11).

On her there are oceans, rivers, waters and floods. Whatever breathes and stirs quickens on her (12. 1. 3). All sorts of animals in the wood stay happily on her. Lions and tigers go about, eating human beings. On her wild boar lives in harmony with wild hog. Serpents reside on her (12. 1. 48).[1] Jackal or hyen a *ula*, wolf, evil spirit[2] and demons (12. 1. 49), Gandharvas, Apsarasas, Arāyas, Kimidins and Piśācas reside over her (12. 1. 50). Swans, eagles, hawks, birds and two-footed winged birds which fly together, live on her (12. 1. 51).

There are six seasons on Bhūmi viz., heat *grīṣma*, Rain *varṣā* autumn *śarad*, Cold *śiśira*, Cool *hemanta*, and Spring *vasanta* (12. 1. 36).

Bhūmi, who is purifying, trembled away the serpents, threw off the Dasyus or barbarians, who hated the gods and chose Indra as her lord and not Vṛtra (12. 1. 37). Thus under the rulership of Indra, the Dasyus were driven off. She thus maintained Aryans on her. Among the Aryans however she made no distinction. She bears the fool and wise.[3] She endures the death of good and sinful (12. 1. 48).

Thus human beings began to reside on Bhūmi. But these beings did not bunch up at one place. She scattered people residing on her (12. 1. 57). Mortals were born of her. They move about on her as bipeds and quadrupeds. Five races of men belong to her (12. 1. 15). There is no uniformity in these five races of men. They are of different speech and of diverse customs according to their homes. It thus seems that the Aryans had established themselves in different parts of India, and that they had different customs and manners according to the place they lived (12. 1. 45). Bhūmi witnesses all activities of men. On her, they sing and dance with loud noises. On her they fight and drum sounds fiercely (12. 1. 41). So this *bhūtadhātrī* (supporter of beings) is requested by the poet not to stagger him on her while sitting, standing, walking with his right and left feet. The poet also maintains that the patient Bhūmi is also increased by his *brahman* or spell (12. 1. 28-29). Bhūmi is not only the scene of the battlefield of human beings but also of *devas* and *asuras*. The gods overcame the demons on her. Thus between such battles, people remained calm and enjoyed peaceful life. Cows, horses and birds were tamed by them (12. 1. 5). She had on her the castles made by the gods (12. 1. 43).

Food and agriculture came into being on her. Whatever

1 *PPP* reads, *sarpaṁ bibhrati surabhi*.

2 *PPP* reads *rakṣika* for *ṛkṣikā*.

3 This is the meaning of *gurubhṛt* one who supports his teacher.

breathes and stirs lives on her (12. 1. 3). She contained on her, forest trees and herbs. Five clans of men living on her, produce and eat rice and barley (*vrīhiyava*). She is the wife of Parjanya and thus is impregnated and fertilised by him and there is the wealth of crops (12. 1. 42). People dig the earth (plough) and sow the seed. Whatever is sown grows and springs up quickly (12. 1. 35). The earth holds in her, secret treasures of jewels and gold. She is the giver of wealth (12. 1. 44). The nomadic populations gradually settled down in villages and forests. They enjoyed civic life. They had their assemblies, gatherings and other functions (12. 1. 56). On her men constructed roads for going on. They also constructed tracks for chariots and for carts. On these roads both kinds of men, good and bad, go about. She does not become partial to any one of them.

Bhūmi is made up of rocks, clay, stone and dust (12. 1. 26). She has many ascends, descends and plains (12. 1. 2). She has mountains, snowcapped mountains and forests. Her colour is brown, black and red. She is fixed. Her appearance is uniform (12. 1. 11). Sometimes she quakes and trembles and stirs greatly. This is what men called earthquake. Indra defends her (12. 1. 18). Serpents crawl about on her in the rainy season. So the poet prays that the harsh biting serpent, or worms stirring about in rain should not crawl on him (12. 1. 46).

The essential characteristic of Bhūmi is her odour[1] *gandha*. This odour is permeated in all products of the earth. Thus the herb, waters, Apsarasas and Gandharvas bear it. The poet prays that he should be possessed of odour. The fragrance entered the flowers and lotus. The immortals brought together the fragrance of lotus in Suryā's marriage. The odour is in human beings, in both men and women. Her splendour and lustre *ruci* is reflected in horses, heroes, wild animals, elephants and in maidens. The poet Atharvan prays that such splendour should come to him (12. 1. 23-25.)

*Pṛthivī and other Deities*: Agni is in the earth (12. 1. 19.) He is the controller of the earth (6. 86. 2.) Agni is placed on the navel of the earth (7. 64. 1.) Agni moves on the earth (3. 21. 7.) Pṛthivī is sometimes referred to as the mother of Agni. She is the cow and Agni is the calf (4. 39. 2.) Agni thus is very closely associated with Pṛthivī. Maruts shower rain on the earth. They pacify the earth with the showers of rain (4. 15. 3.) They carry water from the ocean and discharge on the earth (4. 27. 4.) All gods (Viśvedevāḥ) observe the gathering of men on the earth (2. 9. 4.) The gods reside on the earth (1. 30. 3.) Matariśvan goes on making the clouds of dust and setting in motion the trees on the earth (12. 1. 51.) Vena fixed the heaven and earth as his

[1] The Naiyāyikas define earth as 'gandhavatī'. Cf. also *Tarkasaṁgraha* 10.

abode (4. 1. 4.) The demons Kālakañjas have their greatness on the earth (6. 80. 3). Dhātṛ supports the earth (6. 30. 3). All deities all combined in Virāj, who is the single spirit dwelling on the earth (9. 9. 25-26). Virāj came to men, who called her. At that time Manu, the son of Vivasvat, was the calf and Pṛthivī was the vessel. Pṛthu, the son of Vena milked from her, both cultivation and grain on which men subsist[1] (8. 10. 24). Pṛthu thus seems to be the originator of agriculture on this earth. Indra in the form of bull supported this Pṛthivī (4. 1. 1). Mitra arranged different seasons on the earth and occupied it with his rays (3. 8. 1). Rohita supports Pṛthivī (13. 1. 25). He mounts on the earth (13. 1. 34). Pṛthivī is called Aditi, fulfilling desires of men and scattering men on her surface (12. 1. 61). Viśvakarman, with an oblation, followed Pṛthivi who was then in the ocean of the mid air (12. 1. 60). Aśvins measured her. Viṣṇu strode on her. Indra freed her from the enemies (12. 1. 10). A student of the Vedas (*brahmacārin*) supports the earth. *Ācārya* (his teacher) fashioned the earth (11. 5. 1-8). God Arbudi or Nyrbudi occupy this earth (11. 9. 4). Pṛthivī belongs to Rudra (11. 2. 10). Pṛthivī becomes great in the course of Time (19. 54. 2). The Nakṣatras (lunar mansions) are on Bhūmi (19. 8. 1). Madhukaśā (honey-whip) is born of earth (9. 1. 1). Pṛthivī is the staff of Madhukaśā. Atmosphere is the embryo, sky is the whip of which lightening is the snapper of its golden tip (9. 1. 21). Thus all prominent deities function on Pṛthivī.

*Pṛthivī and medicine*: Pṛthivi is the source of all medicinal plants and herbs. Medicine against flux is moisture from ant-hill. This cure for wound (*arusrāṇa*) is taken from the earth (2. 3. 5). Herbal medicine[2] for leprosy (*śvetakuṣṭha*) is brought up from the earth (1. 24. 4). The earth gives the antidote against poison. The moisture from ant-hill is also a cure against poison (6. 100. 1-3). Of karśafa and viśafa[3] (wild creatures), the heaven is the father and the earth is the mother. It is Viṣkhanda or rheumatism which thins and penetrates a person. Three hundred Viṣkandhakas on the earth (3. 9. 1-6). The plant *Nitatni* grows on the earth. It is used in a medicine for growing hair (6. 136. 1). Pṛthivī is often prayed to relieve men from diseases and Yakṣma (12. 1. 62). Of the medicinal plants, the heaven is the father and Pṛthivī is the mother (3. 23. 6; 8. 7. 2).

*Pṛthivī and magical spells*: The divine waters revelling on the earth are used for coronation of a king (4. 8. 5). Pṛthivī is prayed in a charm for rain. The earth is asked to burst for the cloud of

1 MACDONELL and KEITH: *Vedic Index*, Part II, pp. 16, 129. MUIR, *OST*, Vol. I, p. 161.

2 According to *PPP* śyāmā and other *MSS*. Śāmā is the plant used in cure for leprosy. Kauśika 8. 11 gives the name to be śāmāka or śāmikā.

3 *PPP* reads *karśabha* and *viṣabhya*.

heaven. The earth of good drops is asked to burst forth (7. 19. 1-2). She is invoked to grant riches and desires (12. 1. 40). Bhūmi is prayed to gain sight and not to lose sight year to year. She is also asked to protect a person while sleeping, turning to the right or left side with his ribs touching her (12. 1. 33-34). Bhūmi cleanses the bodies of human beings with waters flowing on her. She is the purifier (12. 1. 30). She also acting with her judgment arrests the person, who hates or fights with her devotees (12. 1. 14). Water-thunderbolts drive away haters from the earth (10. 5. 25). The earth protects the seer from the earthly distress (8. 4. 23). The earth brings to life a person on the point of death (8. 1. 17). The Bamboo plant from which arrow's stick is made, for the use on a bow stands between heaven and earth. Pṛthivī protects one from the missiles of gods (8. 1. 12). Householder's Agni pacifies any injury against the earth. The Mother Earth saves the singer from imprecations (6. 120. 1-2). Offerings are made to Pṛthivī for securing her protection (5. 9. 2-6). *Dūrvā* herb, used in magical rites, has its root in the heaven and has its growth on the surface of the earth (2. 7. 3). *Darbha* rose up from the earth and moves on the earth with vigour (6. 43. 2; 19. 33. 3; 19. 32. 3). The *āñjana* or salve is born of Pṛthivī (19. 44. 3).

*Pṛthivī and Sacrifices*: On Bhūmi men offer to the gods, in the sacrifice the oblations duly prepared. The mortals live on the earth by means of *svadhā* and food (12. 1. 22). On the earth they enclose altar. On her men erect sacrificial posts, straight and bright before the oblations (12. 1. 13). On Pṛthivī there are seats (*sadas*, a place of Soma near the Agnīdhrīya's hearth) and oblation holder (*havirdhāna*, two shades for Soma—cart and sacrificial offerings.) On Bhūmi the priests praise deities with verses along with a chant, knowing the sacrificial formula[1]. On Bhūmi the seven being-makers *bhūtakṛts* sang out for cows. Seven pious ones (*vedhas*) performing sacrifice and penance sit in sessions on her (12. 1. 38-39). In the *bhrhmaudana sava*, ox-hide is spread on the ground. The divine earth is asked to accept the skin with favourable mind (11. 1. 8). The offering of a goat enables one to go to heaven from the back of the earth. The path of the sacrificer after his death is from the back of the earth to *antarikṣa*, then to *dyans*, from the back of *dyaus*, to the luminous world (4. 14. 3).

The poet Atharvan of the Bhūmi-sukta (12. 1) and a number of other Atharvaṇic seers present before our mind a detailed picture of the earth, conceived as a deity. She is the source of all deities, human beings, plant and animal life. Her gaseous state and subsequent liquid and solid states are referred to. Good as well as bad men enjoy on the surface of the earth. But the poet refers to the expulsion of the non-Aryans from the earth; so these good and

[1] *Brahmaṇo yasyamarcanti ṛgbhiḥ sāmnā yājurvēdaḥ.*

bad people are Aryans only. We get an idea about the animals and birds, the poet knows. The social life of the people, their dancing, singing, and their assemblies are referred to. The tracks of men, carts and chariots also were constructed. Sacrifices were performed on her. The poet depicts her odour pervading all things, plants, waters, men and women. He longs to have the splendour found in the earth.[1]

(2) Dvāvāpṛthivī

The heaven and the earth are the first issues of *ṛta* (2. 1. 4). They are separate from each other (3. 31. 4). The *devayāna* paths (the paths which lead to the gods) go between them (3. 15. 2). Tvaṣṭṛ and Rohita fashioned them along with their forms and creatures in them (5. 12. 9, 13. 1. 5-7). They encompass Sūrya (6. 8. 3). They are radiant with rays (7. 117. 1). One entire hymn (4. 26). of Mṛgāra is devoted to sing their glory. They are well nourishing, like-minded, and the foundations of wealth. They are spread over immeasurable distances (4. 26. 1). They are much increased, divine, lucky, wide, profound and praised by poets. They are rich in penance and cause no distress to any one (4. 26. 2-3). They bear nectar, oblations, streams of waters, human beings, cows, and trees (4. 26. 4-5). Men cannot do anything without them. They gratify them with ghee and water (4. 26. 6).

They are invoked to free one from distress (4. 26. 1), from the heriditary disease (2. 10. 1), to give protection by giving patient hearing and to remove the enemies (2. 12. 1, 16. 2). They are called upon to let the *kṛtyā* (witchcraft) fly against him, who has worked it (4. 14. 12). They are repeatedly invoked to grant protection (5. 9. 7; 6. 55. 1; 19. 15. 1).

## VI

## THE DEITIES OF THE WATERS AND THE STORM

Along with Agni, the waters are considered to be very useful for the magical, medicinal and sacrificial rites by the Atharvaṇic poets. They attached great importance to the waters. The whole world came out of the waters. Every year the rainfall brings waters to the mortals. They cure diseases. They are used in the magical rite called water-thunderbolt. Vidyut is the missile of the gods. She comes from the clouds. Rudra appears like lightning, i.e. Vidyut in the atmosphere. He rules over the waters. Like Rudra, Varuṇa is the lord of the waters. Atharvan had a direct conversation with Varuṇa, who admitted his claim for their common source. Maruts and Parjanya are the deities of storm and rain respectively.

[1] Also see the appreciation of the hymn by V. S. Agrawalla, *Vedic conception of the Motherland, B.C. Law*, Volume, Part I, pp. 368-376.

The Maruts are responsible for the phenomenon of rain. Parjanya brings down the rain. Vāta is engaged in the task of urging the clouds to discharge rain. He is the wind in the human body or in the atmosphere. Vāyu is also like Vāta, a deity of the atmosphere.

In this section the water and storm deities are discussed. They are: Āpaḥ, Vidyut, Rudra, Varuṇa, Maruts, Parjanya, Vāta and Vāyu.

### (1) Āpaḥ

The word occurs about 175 times in the AV. There are a number of hymns, exclusively devoted to praise waters. The Atharvaṇic poets profusely use waters in their charms dealing with sacrificial and magical rites. The medicinal value of waters is also prominently noticed by them.

**I. The waters have been given different names:**

The poet explains the significance of each name (3. 13). When Ahi was slain the waters resounded, therefore the word *nadī* is their name (3. 13. 1). Urged by Varuṇa the waters quickly rolled together, Indra obtained them as they went. Hence they get the name Āpaḥ (3. 13. 2). Indra restrained their might as they glided on. Therefore their name is Vār (3. 13. 3). The only one god (Indra) stood upon them (ruled them), who flowed forth. Therefore the mighty water breathed a sigh of relief. Hence the name Udaka is given to them (3. 13. 3). Thus the poet explains each name with mythological significance.

There are different types of waters. There are waters flowing from the snowy mountains, those that flow from the fountains and those of rains (19. 2. 1, 1. 6. 4). Then there are the waters of waste land and plains, those of marshes, of canals (obtained by digging) and those that are brought in vessels (19. 2. 2, 1. 6. 4). Then there are those that are dug without shovel, working in the deep. Then there are waters from the sky and from the streams (19. 2. 3-4).

The waters flow from the snowy mountains (Himavat) and their gathering is in the Indus (Sindhu). Thus the poet refers to the rivers of the Punjab and their source in the Himālaya mountain (19. 2. 1).

The phenomenon of rain is explained as the act of gods in heaven, who make their draughts, that come abundantly in the atmosphere (1. 33. 3).

The waters have eyes and body. With their propitious eyes they are praised to behold the worshipper and with their blissful body to touch his body (1. 33. 4). The waters are of golden colour, pure and purifying (1. 33. 1). They are veritably *amṛta* (3. 13. 7).

Along with the prayers of waters in general, the Atharvaṇic poet particularly invokes the waters of river and rains. The poet feels curiosity for the fact that on Bhūmi the circulating waters flow night and day without failure (12. 1. 9). Very fervantly the poet describes

the rainfall. The cloud of heaven is burst and split forth. The skin bag of waters of the heaven is burst open and people on the earth are united with waters (7. 19. 1). The poet prays that heat should not burn nor the cold smite the cloud in the sky (7. 19. 2). The fertility of the land depends on the rains; hence the poet offers prayers for the fall of rain.

As has been seen above, Indra rules over the flowing waters; but the rain is brought about by Maruts. They make the waters rich in milk and propitious to the herbs. When Maruts pour honey (rain) there is plenty of sustenance and good will. The rain waters fill the hollows of the land. Maruts are excellent swimmers in waters (6. 22. 2-3). The Atharvaṇic poet knows the process by which the water of the sea is evaporated and again sent down as rain. He attributes this function to Maruts. Maruts raise waters from sea to heaven and send it from sky to earth in showers. They move above ruling them. They are the lords of waters (4. 27. 4).

The poet Atharvan, graphically describes the advent of rain. All directions full of mist fly up together. The clouds, urged by wind flock together. Then the waters, the yearning cows of the thundering bull, pacify the earth (4. 15. 1). The troops of Maruts gather together; the herbs become juicy; they are born here and there in all forms and the water of the rain gushes forth on the earth (4. 15. 2). The troops of Maruts sing for Parjanya (god of rain), and there is down-pour of water (4. 15. 4). Thundering of the clouds goes on in the sky. The rain anoints the earth with milk. There is thus abundant water. The herdsmen, having their cattles thinned by the rain, are now driving them to shelter (4. 15. 6). The fountains and channels looking like serpent are all filled to the brim with the waters (4. 15. 7).

The clouds may be dispersed by wind and there would be no rain; so the poet prays that there should be lightning in every direction, the winds should blow from different quarters and clouds assembling together should bring down the rain (4. 15. 8). Agni, in agreement with waters' selves, has become the lord of the herbs. He is praised to bring down rain, the *amṛta* from the sky (4. 15. 10). Prajāpati from the sea excites the clouds. The seed of the mighty horse (cloud) is filled up. Then Asura, the father, pours down the rain. The gurgles of water are puffed out and the frogs croak along the water (4. 15. 11-12). She-frog, Tāduri, Khaṇvakhā and Khaimkhā enjoy the rain. The whole vegetable and human world become delighted (4. 15. 16). Thus the poet gorgeously describes the advent of rain.

**II. Waters at the time of the creation of the world:**

In the beginning of creation there were waters. They, immortal and knowing *ṛta*, received and protected all germs. Ka or Prajāpati

ruled over these divine waters. Thus the Atharvaṇic poet holds that there was water in the beginning. It contained in it the seeds of all. From the waters the whole world came out. Then the waters generated the young one and set in motion an embryo. The embryo was covered with gold (Hiraṇyagarbha 4. 2. 6, 8). Then there is a reference to the creation of man from the primeval waters. In the sluggish (primeval) waters, the human body is kept. Then there is growth of power (11. 8. 34). In another account of the creation of the world from the Brahman, it is stated that the Brahman deposited in the man waters which were moving restlessly, which were produced from rivers, and which were strong, ruddy, dark, turbid and which were running upward, downward and crosswise (10. 2. 11). This seems to be the blood in the body of man. It seems that the waters were not agreeable to the human body. Still they were caused to settle down in it. There are the waters of blood and bladder, those hasting, steady, secret, clear and thick (11. 8. 28). So the Atharvaṇic thinker conceives the growth and development of the body from waters. Even the life of the body is clothed in waters. When the man was being fashioned, in his jaws the Brahman put the tongue and then attached voice in it. Then the Brahman clothing himself in waters, rolls into the existence (10. 2. 7).

**III. Waters in relation with other deities:**

Varuṇa is the lord of waters (5. 24. 4). Maruts and Indra are also their lords (4. 27. 4, 3. 13. 4). However regarding the source of waters, different deities are mentioned. Kāla produced waters (19. 54. 1). A Vedic student generated waters (10. 5. 7). The sacred cow yielded waters (10. 10. 8). One-fourth seed of the sacred cow was waters, other three-fourth being *amṛta*, *yajña* and *paśus* (10.10.29). Gods milked Virāj and waters were the milking (8. 10. 15).

The waters created in this way were running in all directions. Their great opponent was Vṛtra. He stopped the waters going in all directions (6. 85. 3). Waters have to obey the ordinances of a deity, Sāravān. They stand in his course (7. 41. 1). The waters contain Yakṣa (a spirit) in them and they flow for the prosperity of Rudra (11. 2. 24).

The waters also contain in themselves a number of deities and other objects. Agni is the gall of waters (18. 3. 5). There are Agnis in the waters (8. 1. 11). The waters bear them (12. 1. 9, 3. 21. 1). Savitṛ and Agni were born of the waters (1. 33. 1). The waters bear the fragrance of Bhūmi (12. 1. 9). A body of Indra is in waters (17. 1. 13). Prāṇa is the embryo of waters (11. 4. 26). Devas reside in them (1. 30. 3). Devas are their conductors. The Brahman is the flower of waters (10. 8. 34). Mātariśvan entered in water. The gods entered in the seas (10. 8. 40). The waters wait upon Madhukaśā (lightning, 9. 1. 9). Rudra is in waters (7. 92. 1). Nakṣatras are in

waters (19. 8. 1). The golden home of Varuṇa is in waters (7. 88. 1). Plants are the embryo of waters (8. 7. 8). Rohita is the power rising from waters (13. 1. 2). He is the power within waters (13. 1. 1). He is a god within waters (13. 3. 15). When he rises up the waters begin flowing (13. 1. 21). *Darbha* is the fire of the waters (19. 33. 1). *Añjana* (salve) is increased by the force of waters (19. 45. 3). The waters are set in the Ucchiṣtha (11. 7. 2). Suparṇa (the Sun) goes across the waters (ocean 7. 42. 1). Kālakañjas (the demons who became stars and are heavenly dogs) have their birth in waters (6. 80. 3). The waters favour Soma. Wherever there is Soma, there the rain water is excellent (7. 19. 2).

IV. The waters in various rites:

(1) *The waters in the coronation of a king.* One of the important rite in the coronation is sprinkling the king with the holy waters. At the time of the sprinkling the king is addressed: 'Let the heavenly waters be rich in milk', i.e., there should be ample rain in the domain of the king. Prosperity of the kingdom being dependant upon rainfall, the sprinkling of the king with water has this significance. Water is sprinkled on the head of the king. With the splendour of the waters of heaven that revel with milk in atmosphere and also on the earth, the priest sprinkles the king with water (4 .8. 4-5). The king thus sprinkled with the waters is the leapord in waters (4. 8. 7). Thus the waters bring prosperity and splendour to the newly coronated king.

(2) *Waters in the ceremony for entering in the newly built house*: When the new house is built, water is brought in it with ceremony. The water thus brought are expected to cure and remove completely Yakṣma. It seems that the people at that time were very much harassed by Yakṣma and invoked the help of the waters to cure it. Fire and water are two doors of *ṛta* (9. 3. 22-23). They are placed in the newly built house (3. 12. 9).

(3) *Water in marriage rite.* Bride is given bath at the time of marriage. The Brāhmaṇas take her for bathing. The water that is used for bathing should not kill the heroes. The waters contain hundred cleaners and are prayed to be propitious to the bride (14. 1. 39-40).

(4) *Water in Svargaudana Sacrifice.* The AV has its own system of sacrifice, called *savas*, which are of 22 varieties. Savargaudana is one of them. The essential part of this rite is the offering of cooked rice by husband and wife to secure prosperity and happiness in heaven and in this world. Rice grains are thrashed and sifted. They are pounded with the help of mortar and pestle. Sometimes it may happen that some black-bird or barbarian woman desecrates the mortar and pestle. So the purification is by means of water. Whenever a black-bird comes all of a sudden and spoils one's

plans or when a barbarian (*dāsa*) woman with wet hand smears the pestle and mortar, the waters are invoked to cleanse them (12. 3. 13). Then the measured quantities of water and rice grain is taken. Water is kept on fire. The rice grains are thrown in it. The waters are asked to cook the rice grains (12. 3. 27). Then the water is boiling and rice grains are stirred in it. The grains struggle up and dance, being heated. They hurl foam and abundant drops. Those grains at the bottom of the pot are made to stand up, and they move all over the waters (12. 3. 29-30).

(5) *Water in the offering of cow with hundred rice dishes. . . .* As above the rice is prepared. Offering is made. Finally water is poured on the hands of the priest. Heavenly waters, rich in honey, dripping with ghee are kept in the hands of the priests. With what desire the sacrificer pours waters on the hands of the priests all that comes to him. He hopes to be the lord of wealth (10. 9. 27).

(6) *In the Brahmaudana rite*: Details about the bringing water for the purpose of cooking rice are given. Women are asked to go to the water-stall and bring the holy water. Those women, who have adorned themselves, whose husbands are alive and who possess progeny receive the vessel for bringing water. These clean, purified and worshipful maidens put the water in the pot and then rice grains are put in the water (11. 1. 13-18).

(7) *Water in shaving rite*: In the *godāna* (cutting of hair) rite the youth has his head and beard shaved. Water is used for making wet the beard (6. 68. 2).

(8) *Offering of water to a guest*: The AV treats the reception of a guest (*atithi-satkāra*) as a sacrifice. Offering of water to a guest is nothing but bringing forward sacrificial waters (9. 6. 4).

(9) *Waters in funeral rite*: Deceased person is asked to go to waters if the stay in water is agreeable to him. (18. 2. 7). When the dead body is consigned to flames, the flesh eating fire (*kravyād*) is appeased with the waters (3. 21. 10). In the rite in honour of the manes, the water is offered. The heavenly waters rich in honey, satisfying son and grandson yielding *svadhā* and *amṛta*, are prayed to gratify the fathers in heaven and their descendants in this world (18. 4. 39).

**V. Waters used for medicinal purposes:**

(1) *Waters against fever* (*takman*). Waters are used in preparing lotion against fever. Iron axe is made red hot and is dipped in water. A person suffering from fever is sprinkled with this lotion. (Kauśika 26. 25). Agni (in the heated axe) entering, burns the waters (1. 25. 1). This lotion is used for curing all sorts of fever, such as constant fever, intermittant fever, fever which occurs after one day, four days and seasonal fever (*Keśava* loc. cit.).

(2) *Waters as remedy against flux*. Water flowing down the hill is a healing balm and an excellent medicine (2. 3. 1). It has

thousand remedies against flux (2. 3. 2). The Asuras dug deep down to secure this wonderful wound healer. It makes the disease disappear (2. 3. 3). The ants *upajīkas* or *upacīkas* according to *Paippalāda* bring up this remedy from ocean or any reservoir of water under the surface. That is the remedy for flux. The earth out of which the ants make their high hills contains some moisture which has remedial properties.

(3) *Worms are caused by water.* In a charm against worms, it is said that the worms are in water and then they enter in our body. The worms are killed by the Atharvaṇic charm (2. 31. 4-5).

(4) *Waters used for curing heriditary disease.* Kṣetriya is an innate disease. It is also described as pulmonary consumption. It seems that a patient suffering from such diseases was treated with waters (3. 7. 5).

(5) *Water against Yakṣma.* The waters contain medicinal qualities. They are used to cure a person suffering from Yakṣma (tuberculosis or phthisis) (6. 91. 3, 19. 2. 3). The waters in the beginning were heavenly herbs. They make disappear from every limb, the sinful Yakṣma (8. 7. 3).

(6) *Water against heart disease.* Waters flowing from the snowy mountain (Himavat) and joining in the river Sindhu, are used to cure heart's disease. The river Sindhu and its tributaries seem to contain medicinal properties to cure the heart disease (6. 24. 1).

(7) *Water against pain.* Whatever rupture one has got that injures the eyes, heels or toes, all that the waters, the most skilful physician, make well again (6. 24. 2).

(8) *Waters against stinging pain (śalya).* The seven rays of Sūrya bring the waters downward from the sky. These are the streams of ocean. These waters (rain water) remove the stinging pain. This water seems to have been utilized for curing the pricking sensation in the throat according to GRIFFITH (7. 107. 1).

(9) The healing plant *lākṣā* is the sister of water. Thus the healing qualities of *lākṣā* are connected with the waters (5. 5. 7).

(10) The plant *kapitthaka* is used in *vājīkaraṇa* rite to secure virile power. This plant is the essence of waters. So the quality of the plant to increase virility is due to the waters (4. 4. 5).

(11) Mineral waters also seem to be referred to (3. 13. 5). The strong waters, which fill one with honey, bring breath and splendour. These mineral waters make one full of splendour and strong.

**VI. The waters in the magical rites:**

The golden and garlanded amulet is cleansed with water for purification (10. 6. 3). The waters bearing the amulet run unexhausted. It yields to them immortality. It is on account of the amulet that the waters are immortal (10. 6. 14). The triple amulet of gold is worn for protection. The waters guard the amulet. Thirty-three

deities and three heroic deeds guarded the amulet within the waters, holding it dear (19. 27. 9-10). Waters with other deities are invoked to grant long life by means of the triple amulet (5. 28. 2). The triple amulet of metals (gold, iron and silver) is used for protection and prosperity of the wearer. It has three births, viz., from Agni, from Soma and from waters. So the triple amulet is born of waters (5. 28. 6). Golden amulet is tied on the body for securing long life. The amulet contains the brilliancy, light, force and strength of waters (1. 35. 3). Amulet of pearl is tied for long life and prosperity. The waters make the pearl. The bone of gods becomes pearl, which goes about in the waters. From that the pearl amulet is made (4. 10. 7).

The waters contain brilliancy. The fortunate goddess, who gave birth to Indra is prayed to bring the splendour to the person, who prays her (6. 38. 2). A person who desires vigour in his body is called upon to invoke the help of waters (2. 29. 5). For securing glory, the waters are invoked (6. 58. 2). There is a charm to compel a man's love. Pangs of love are produced in the heart of the man, when the rite is performed by a woman. Gods poured love (*smara*) within the waters, greatly burning with pangs. As the water is heated the pangs of the man also increase and at the end, the man is compelled to love that woman (6. 132. 1-4). WEBER, (*Indische Studien V*, 245), supposes that the hymn 6. 132 contains a brewing charm in which a person desirous of love boils some concoction that attracts irresistibly the maiden beloved. But the hymn does not refer to any such practice. It seems, according to BLOOMFIELD, that there is an allusion to some mythic touch. Sāyaṇa suggests that the gods poured love (*smara*), who was pining for Ādhi, his consort, in water to quench him, or that they placed him in the atmospheric waters as the lord of lovers. The refrain to the hymn refers to the ordinances of Varuṇa. Varuṇa is the lord or the controller of waters. So with the permission of Varuṇa, the rite is practised. The gods poured *smara* in the waters either by way of punishing him for his attacks on themselves or in order to quench him and that the person practising the charm kindles him anew with the permission of Varuṇa.[1] Kauśika does not illumine this point.

For securing success in gambling, dust, gravel and waters are used. It seems that the dye is dipped in water and rubbed in dust and gravel to ensure success in gambling (7. 114. 2). Waters are used in a charm to make one fearless (19. 44. 1). The flesh eating demons or *piśācas* lie concealed in drinking water and cause injury to a person, who drinks it (5. 29. 6). There are *piśācas* in waters. The plant *ajasṛṅgī* is used in a rite to expose those who shine in waters (4. 37. 10).

[1] *See* BLOOMFIELD, *SBE*, Vol. XLII, p. 535.

The Apsarasas stay in water. They cause harm to the persons by coming out of waters. The plant *ajasṛñgī* is used in a rite to drive them back in waters (4. 37. 3). The waters are invoked to wash away the stain, taint, each sinful wrong and every harmless course or false oath to avoid debt (7. 94. 3). The waters remove perdition. If a fruit falls from the tree on the body, on whatever part of the body or of a garment, the waters remove the perdition (6. 124. 2). The Divine waters are prayed to release one from distress (11. 6. 11). In a charm to relieve one of distress, magical water is prepared and is used with a spell. The bull of waters is released, breaking, killing and slaughtering, dimming, mind-killing, digging, burning, spoiling the self and body of one who hates the practitioner and whom he hates. Fire in the water is thus released for this purpose. That is the most terrible power of waters (17. 1). The waters are prayed in a charm for securing long life (16. 4. 6). They shower nectar and thus secure long life (8. 1. 5). They make one sweet, pleasant and agreeable (6. 61. 1). They are cleaners. Whatever evil pollution one has committed, whatever ill-doing there is, the waters cleanse one from it and from the crushing Agni (Saṅkasuka 12. 2. 40). In a newly constructed canal, water is released with a ceremony. A piece of gold is buried. A frog is fastened there and is covered with a water-plant. Then water is conducted through the canal (6. 23. 1-3). They protect one against the evil influence of a black bird (*kṛṣṇa śakuni*). Whatever evil brought about by the black bird flying about, the waters are invoked to remove it and protect one from the difficulty caused thereby (7. 66. 1). All-round protection is secured by a charm containing praise of the waters (3. 26. 3). They with their heat, rage, gleam, burning and brilliancy take away all these things from the enemy and make him powerless (2. 23. 1-5). A drop of water falling from the sky is inauspicious. If from sky or atmosphere a drop of water, by means of a spell its evil effect is removed (6. 124. 1).

If a person oppresses a Brāhmaṇa, he does not get water to drink. He will have to drink only the water of the tears rolling from the eyes of a distressed person, also that used for the bathing of the dead and that used for the shaving of beard (5. 19. 13-14). They can be used for concealing oneself safely. This immortal remedy (*amṛta*) Mātali, the charioteer of Indra, knows. He secured this lore for the cost of a chariot. By means of this remedy Indra entered into the waters and remained concealed.[1] Water, when magically charmed is very effective. It is to be hurled against the direction of the enemy. 'Water thunderbolts' according to WHITNEY (10. 5), 'are nothing but a highfalutin name well befitting the black magic for handfuls of water hurled with much hocus pocus.' The

[1] Cf. *Mbh.* 5. 16. 11 (*BORI edn.*)

waters are the power, force, heroism, of Indra. For conquest, they are used with magical application by the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas. All beings should surrender to the practitioner. The water should be submissive to him (10. 5. 1-6).

### (2) Vidyut

She is a goddess (*devī*). All gods created her and made her an arrow for hurling (1. 13. 4). She is a child of the light from which she gathers heat. She has both, heat and a missile. Her home is in secret in the ocean (of the clouds), where she is set up as its navel (1. 13. 1-2). She produces lightning, thundering and discharges the bolt. She is prayed to be merciful to the people in this world and their children. She smites down an impious person with her bolt (1. 13. 1).

### (3) Rudra

The word occurs 55 times in the AV and about 15 times in plural.

Rudra has been very vividly described by the poets in the AV. He has a face, eyes, skin, form, belly, tongue, mouth, smell and teeth (11. 2. 56). He has 1,000 eyes and blue locks of hair (11. 2. 7). He kills half of the army at once. He bears a golden yellow bow. He has hundred weapons and kills thousands. His arrow is a divine missile and is very disastrous (11. 2. 12). His horses are black. He is black, swarthy, killing, fearful. He makes the chariot of the hairy demon Keśin fall down (11. 2. 18). He has a club, also a divine missile (11. 2. 19). He cries loudly (11. 2. 3). He is followed by a huge army, which is noisy, hairy, and which jointly enjoys his company (11. 2. 31). He has dogs which howl, which swallow without cutting and whose mouths are wide (11. 2. 30). He is described as the lord of the beings and cattles (11. 2. 1). He is a creator and destroyer (Bhava and Śarva). He is immortal (11. 2. 3). Bhava is the master of heaven, earth and atmosphere (11. 2. 27). He stands in the atmosphere, killing the non-sacrificers and god-mockers (11. 2. 23). Bhava and Śarva go together united for heroic deeds (11. 2. 14). He is the atmosphere (11. 2. 4).

Homage is paid to him, as he is the lord of bipeds and quadrupeds. He is prayed not to expose the bodies of his worshipper to dogs, jackals, vultures, black and greedy; so that the flies and birds should not find the dead bodies for eating (11. 2. 3). The four directions, earth, atmosphere, life and breathing belong to him only (11. 2. 10). He is prayed to remove the dogs, jackals, portents and weepers with dishevelled hair (11. 2. 11).

Rudra while acting in anger shakes the branch of divine tree. He is therefore prayed not to shake the tree for the worshipper (11. 2. 19). He is prayed not to be covetous of the goats, sheep, cows and men of the worshipper. He is asked to feed happily on the

wild beasts of the forest and wild animals. His worthy form is in the water. Waters flow from the sky for his prosperity (11. 2. 24). He hurls his missile at water-creatures, dolphins, *purikayas* and fishes. There is no distance for him. He looks over the whole earth. From the east he smiles at the northern ocean (11. 2. 25). His weapon is lightning (11. 2. 26).

He is prayed to be gracious to the sacrificer and to any one who says, 'the gods exist'.

Rudra is identified with Agni. This is quite natural, since Agni and Rudra may appear in the same form as lightning in the atmosphere. Again there is Agni in the water, so also Rudra ruling over the watery creation also (7. 87. 1).

Rudra is entrusted with the safety of the cattles. He sees that they increase. This is quite natural, as he is Paśupati (the lord of the cattles) (6. 14. 1).

In the tonsure ceremony (*godāna*) Rudra along with others is asked to make the head of the boy wet with water (6. 68).

Rudra is invoked in a number of magic rites. In battle, Rudra is called upon to attack and pierce the enemies with Śaravya (group of missiles), whether the enemy be one's own or stranger, a neighbour or outsider (1. 19. 3).

In an assembly, when one desires to overcome his adversaries in disputations, he ties amulet of *pātā* on his hand, chews it while speaking. He recites the hymn (2. 27), while coming in the assembly. He invokes Rudra, having healing remedies or cooling medicine (*jalaṣa bheṣaja*, see BLOOMFIELD *AJP*, XII, 425), and who is an active worker, to smite the opponent in dispute with the help of the herb *pātā* (2. 27. 6).

In a charm for securing splendour, Rudra is invoked to bestow the splendour of elephant on the person (3. 22. 2).

Homage is paid to Rudra for removing fever (6. 20. 2).

In a charm to destroy demons and sorcerers, Rudra is called upon to crush the necks of *piśācas* and to crush the ribs of sorcerers (6. 32. 2).

*Viṣāṇika* (self-shed cow's horn) is the urine of Rudra and navel of the immortality. It is used to remove the diseases arising out of wind or for stopping the flow of blood from the wound (6. 44. 3).

In a charm for curing wounds *jalāṣa* is used. *Jalāṣa* (or foam of the cow's urine) is the remedy of Rudra. By this, one cures the wound caused by an arrow, having one shaft and hundred tips. It is to be poured on the wound. It is a very formidable remedy (6. 57).

In a spell to remove sharp pain, Rudra is invoked. By this spell, Rudra's arrow, which has been hurled at a person against his limbs and heart, is taken out of his body. If there is poison in the hundred veins, distributed all along the body, that is also taken out. Thus ultimately the arrow of Rudra and poisoning due to that, is nullified (6. 90).

In a rite for securing success in battle, nets are spread out for trapping the enemy. Rudra is supposed to carry with himself one such net to trap the enemy. Actually a net is spread for trapping the enemy and Rudra is invoked to patronize it. Modern warfare also has got barbed wire-fencing and such other means to trap the enemy (8. 8. 12).

The amulet of *pratisara* is tied for protection on the body of a person by Rudra and other gods (8. 5. 10).

Rudras are invoked to relieve the worshipper from the sin (11. 6. 13).

### (4) Varuṇa

The word occurs about 150 times in the AV.

Varuṇa is described with a number of words, such as, *śatavṛṣṇya*, one having hundredfold virility (1. 3. 3), *asura*, *ugra*, formidable (1. 10. 2), a king (1. 10. 2), *satyadharman*, of true ordinances (1. 10. 3), *nṛcakṣa*, observing men (4. 16. 7), *śagmiya sakhā*, helpful companion (5. 1. 9), *iṣira*, lively (5. 1. 9), *divaḥ kaviḥ* heavenly poet (5. 13. 1), *apām adhipatiḥ*, the lord of waters (5. 24. 4), etc.

There are a number of hymns, which exclusively praise Varuṇa. It seems that the Atharvaṇic poets have maintained the Ṛgvedic greatness of Varuṇa. The hymn (4. 16) is an illustration to the point. Whitney[1] points out the exceptional character of the hymn as an unrestricted presence and influence of super human powers. Roth[2] remarks 'There is no other hymn in the entire Vedic Literature which presents divine omniscience in terms so emphatic. This may be an older hymn pressed by the Atharvaṇic poet for the purpose of magic.[3]

Varuṇa is a mighty superintendent of these words. He looks as if from near. This god knows all secret movements of man. If a man stands, walks, deceives, moves about secretly, if two persons counsel together sitting, Varuṇa is always there as the third person. Earth, heaven and oceans (of water and mid-air) are ruled by king Varuṇa. He is found even in a smallest drop of water. None can escape from the sight of Varuṇa, even if one would go beyond heaven to escape from his punishments; for, his spies have thousand eyes and look from heaven. He has counted the winklings of the eyes of people. His snares are extended three-fold seven each. In these snares are caught the men, who speak falsehood. They never escape from him. Being punished by Varuṇa for speaking falsehood, the culprit suffers from dropsy. The rogue has his belly hanging and bandaged. Varuṇa is everywhere. He is crosswise and lengthwise. He is both native and stranger. He is both human and divine (4. 16).

[1] *Atharvaveda*, p. 176.

[2] *Abhandlung über den Atharvaveda*, p. 30, quoted by Bloomfield, *SBE*, Vol. XLII, p. 389.

[3] Bloomfield differs, loc. cit.

Varuṇa is the best and highest of all gods (6. 21. 2).

Varuṇa is a son of Aditi and consequently called a Āditya. He is identified with Rohita (13. 3. 13).

King Varuṇa has a golden house in the waters. From that place the king ordains for the release of all bonds.[1] (7. 88. 1).

Varuṇa is praised to release the worshipper from all diseases. He is also asked to pardon a sinner, who takes an oath, with the names of deities such as 'O Varuṇa', 'O waters', or 'O cows' (7. 88. 2). Varuṇa cuts off all bonds, and removes all evil-dreaming and difficulty (7. 88. 4). He is prayed to pardon the sinner, who violates his ordinances without any intention (6. 51. 3). Varuṇa is approached by the worshipper with awe, being afraid of his punishment.

Varuṇa is the lord of Western direction. He protects men in that direction from the serpents (3. 27. 3).[2] The person, whom the worshipper hates and who hates him are put in the mouth of the guardians of this direction (loc. cit.). Varuṇa has an authority over the serpent-world. He with Indra and Mitra hands over the serpent to the charmer priest for making it devoid of poison (10. 4. 16). The Atharvaṇic priest, who employs a serpent-charm admits that Varuṇa, the poet of heaven has handed over the serpents to him with formidable spells. By means of these spells he removes the poison of the serpents. Thus Varuṇa has an authority over the serpents and knows the spells by means of which the poison can be dissolved (5. 13. 1). The serpents thus are inferior in strength to gods. There is chariot race between the gods and serpents. In the race, the chariot of the serpents came last and thus were defeated. The first in the race was the chariot of Indra, the second was that of Devas and the third was of Varuṇa. This story tells us how the serpents were weaker than the gods, who are invoked to smash them (10. 4. 1).

The help of Varuṇa is sought in a number of rites. In a spell against fever *takman* he is called as one having purified skill and is invoked along with Agni and Soma to banish fever (5. 22. 1). Varuṇa is the father of the reed which is used in a rite for releasing urine (1. 3. 3). In a charm for curing phthisis *yakṣma* king Varuṇa, the lustrous lord is invoked to cure one of burning fever, which leads to consumption (6. 20. 2). Varuṇa of thousand virile powers is invoked by the poets to remove sin and he along with Mitra to bestow *āñjana* or ointment for protection. Varuṇa and Mitra brought the

[1] This is the rendering of the word *dāmāni* which is an emendation by WHITNEY and ROTH for *dhāmāni*, read by *S.P.P.'s* edition. Sāyaṇa reads *dhāmāni* and interprets as 'places' and quotes YĀSKA's *Nirukta* 9. 28 to mean the places, names and births. *See* Sāyaṇa on AV (7. 88. 1). But the emendation *dāmāni* is justified on the ground that the subject of the whole hymn is the release of fetters or bonds *dāmāni*.

[2] The subject of this hymn is a snake charm according to the Western scholars, Sāyaṇa considers this to be used for battle rite to encourage one's army.

ointment for the use of the worshippers (19. 44. 8-9). In the marriage rite he is invoked to bring the bride, by the friends and relatives of the bridegroom, who await the arrival of the marriage procession. Varuṇa brings the bride, who is expected to be kind to the brothers of the husband (14. 1. 62). In a rite for the tonsure of a boy (*godāna*), king Varuṇa's shaving by Savitṛ is an ideal process to be followed. In the spell for the *godāna* rite, the Brāhmaṇas shave the young boy just in the manner, Savitṛ shaved Varuṇa (6. 68. 3). In a rite for successful conception of a woman various deities are invoked to bring about effective conception. King Varuṇa knows the drink which brings about conception. The performer is asked to drink the draught (5. 25. 6).[1] It seems that Varuṇa had sometime lost his virile power. Gandharvas prepared a medicine for him from the plant (*kapittha* root), which they dug out. Thus in a rite for restoring the virile power of a man, Varuṇa's case is taken as an assurance for the success of the medical treatment along with the recitation of spells (4. 4. 1).

Varuṇa is also invoked in a rite to secure success and to destroy the rivals. Thus the Atharvaṇic priest recites a charm to remove the rivals, under the inspiration of Varuṇa and other deities (9. 2. 6). He is invoked for securing success and maintaining superiority (1. 9. 1). For destroying the demons, an amulet of lead is recommended. Varuṇa has blessed the amulet for this purpose (1. 16. 2).

Wrath of Varuṇa against a person, who speaks falsehood is severe. He punishes the sinner with dropsy. The priest intervenes and pleads for the sinner with Varuṇa.

Varuṇa is *asura* (mighty lord) and his rule is over all gods, his wills come true. So the poor sinner is trembling at the fury of such mighty king. Yet by means of his incantations, the sinner is exempted from the punishment and is pardoned. The might of Varuṇa is as great as the incantation of the Atharvaṇic priest (1. 10. 4).

Thus Varuṇa if properly approached by the priest, is pacified and grants happiness for his worshipper and wards off the missiles of the enemies (1. 20. 3, 6. 4. 2). The priest also claims to free one from the fetters of Varuṇa by his incantations (2. 10. 1).

Water is charged with magical effects and is hurled at different directions, pointing to the enemy. The magically charged water is designated as the bond of Varuṇa and is used to bind the enemy of the performer, in his food and breath. It may be noticed how the Atharvaṇic poet has turned the solemn bonds of the *paśas* (snares) of Varuṇa to the magical effect in binding the enemy, so that he may not live at all (10. 6. 44).

In a rite for securing harmony among the contending members of the family, Varuṇa is invoked to make the members of like mind

[1] *See* Kauśika, 35. 5 for the drink.

under the fortunes of a stern corrector. Their opposition and heart burning to his supremacy is anulled by offering ghee in fire. Varuṇa and other deities bring about harmony as a result of this pacification (6. 73. 1).

In royal rites Varuṇa is invoked. To establish sovereignty of a king, Varuṇa's assistance is sought (6. 88. 2). A king with a view to establishing himself firmly on the throne and destroying rivals, resorts to magical rites. He put on an amulet of *parṇa* tree. It enables him to secure domain, wealth and royalty. This amulet is of Soma, given by Indra and ruled by Varuṇa. So Varuṇa with the amulet makes the king, the sovereign ruler (3. 5. 4). An exiled king, by the turn of fortune is recalled by his people and is crowned again. In the rite for his re-establishment on the throne, Varuṇa is asked to invite the exiled king from waters, where he may be hiding (3. 3. 3). Varuṇa also is invoked along with other deities to bring about union among the different kinsmen of a king, so that his royalty would be strong and that he would be midmost-man in his supporters (3. 8. 3). A king is, on another occasion, elected by his people and is to be crowned. Formally he is chosen by different deities such as Varuṇa, Mitra and others.

Root *vṛ* (to choose) in Varuṇa is utilized by the poet in this connection. Varuṇa has called the elected king from the furthest distance. Naturally at the choice of Varuṇa, the king accepts the invitation of his people (3. 4. 5). The earthly king is like Indra and his electors are on par with Varuṇa. The king is prayed to be in accordance with the wishes of his electors or priests, etc., (*varuṇas*) (3. 4. 6).

Varuṇa is invoked among others to appease the funeral fire. The funeral fire is damped with holy water and is extinguished (3. 21. 8).

Varuṇa and Mitra acted as interceders in the restoration of the stolen wife of a Brāhmaṇa by Kṣatriya to her former husband (5. 17. 2). The cow and wife of a Brāhmaṇa are given special protection by the incantation of the Atharvaṇic poets. The cow of Brāhmaṇa must not be slaughtered. If a cow of a Brāhmaṇa is slaughtered it is a divine poison—thus indeed Varuṇa said. Thus Varuṇa actively interested himself in keeping the kine of Brāhmaṇas safe (5. 19. 10).

In the mystic hymn (5. 1) Varuṇa is said to have different positions and is capable of having wonderful forms which are praised by poets. His strength is increased by the offering of an oblation, a mixture of half milk and half Soma (5. 1. 7-8).

Varuṇa's two arms are referred to (9. 4. 8). The Divine Bull has the arms of Varuṇa (loc. cit.). He is also mentioned as the yellow father (5. 11. 1).

Varuṇa is a Brahmacārin (a Vedic student). He becomes the Ācārya (a teacher). He makes his own the whole ghee, whatever is sought of Prajāpati (11. 5. 15).

There seems to be a close personal contact of the Atharvaṇic seers with divinities such as Indra and Varuṇa. Bṛhaddiva Atharvan spoke of his own self as of Indra (5. 1. 9). Atharvan himself had a personal talk with Varuṇa. It seems that the latter had bestowed as a gift on the former a brindled cow and now the latter was retracting the gift. There is a dialogue between Atharvan and Varuṇa in this connection (5. 11). Atharvan asks Varuṇa as to how he, having given the spotted cow as sacrificial gift, thinks of retracting his gift (5. 11. 1). Varuṇa replies that he did not want to retract his gift but he wants to contemplate on her. He further asks him by what poetic compositions he is a *kāvya* and by producing what he is *jātavedas* (5. 11. 2). Atharvan replies that in truth he was profound in wisdom and from the very birth he knew all created things. He further adds that no Dāsa nor Āryan with all his might can violate the ordinance that he establishes (5. 11. 3). However Atharvan with a view to praising Varuṇa modestly says that there was none wiser (*kavitara*) in understanding than he (Varuṇa) and that he (Varuṇa) knows all creatures and that even a cunning man is afraid of him. To the query of Atharvan as to what is beyond the atmosphere, Varuṇa replies that there is one thing beyond the atmosphere and there is something hard to attain on this side of that thing. Varuṇa then speaks harshly condemning the glory of the Paṇis and the Dāsas (barbarians, 5. 11. 4-6). It seems that the Paṇis and Dāsas retracted their gift and did not keep their word. So Atharvan appeals to Varuṇa who then agrees to restore the cow to Atharvan and asks him to sing his glory among all human regions. Atharvan promises him to sing his glory among all human tribes and asks back the gift taken by Varuṇa, for he claims that he (Varuṇa) is his friend as he walked with him for seven steps (*saptapadaḥ sakhā*). Atharvan further reminds Varuṇa that both of them have a common origin, *dyaus*. Varuṇa admits the claim of Atharvan for their common source and assures him that he is his friend. Varuṇa further adds that he as *deva* (god) is conferring vigour on *deva* (a priest), who praises him (Atharvan) and that an intelligent sage (Atharvan) is singing another sage (*vipra-Varuṇa*). The Atharvaṇic poet then concludes that Varuṇa has begotten the Father Atharvan, a kinsman of the gods, and that Varuṇa should be pleased to grant him wealth for he (Varuṇa) is his friend and eminent kinsman (5. 11. 7-11).

The spotted cow mentioned here seems to be referred to at (7. 104. 1), where it is described as giving good milk and having a constant calf.

It may be noted here that Atharvan, while conversing with Varuṇa, speaks with him on the terms of equality and is always conscious of his poetic ability and as an ordainer of laws which all obey.

In this dialogue one sees another phase of the character of Varuṇa. In the RV and in some portion of the AV one observes

how the singer stoops to humility in the august presence of Varuṇa. Atharvan, perhaps is the single seer, who challenges Varuṇa and talks to him of his common descent. This is the characteristic feature of Atharvan that even the sternest of the gods become humble before him.

### (5) Maruts

The word occurs about 85 times in the AV.

The Maruts are the formidable sons of the spotted mother (the speckled cloud) (5. 21. 11). They are the lords of the mountains (5. 24. 6). They are in groups. Their number is twenty-one[1] (13. 1. 13). They go about bearing all forms (1. 1. 1). They are the offsprings of water. Their skin is bright like the sun (1. 26. 3). They sing songs (19. 10. 9, 7. 24. 1). The father of the Maruts is the over-lord of cattle[2] (5. 24. 12). One Mṛgāra hymn (4. 27) glorifies the Maruts. They protect the singer in securing wealth in battle. Like an easily controlled horse, they come to the help of the singer (4. 27. 1). They magnify the never failing fountain (cloud of water) in the sky. Then they sprinkle water over the plants (4. 27. 2). The Maruts are poets (*kavi*). They send forth the milk of the cows, juice of the plants and speed of the horses (4. 27. 3.) They raise the water from the ocean to heaven and send it down from the sky in showers. They move mightily, ruling the waters (4. 27. 4). They pacify people with showers of rain. They bestow upon people health and vigour. They send torrents of rain, ruling them (4. 27. 5). The army of the Maruts has powerful front. It is formidable in battles (4. 27. 7). They are prayed to relieve the singer from distress.

The Maruts are thus the formidable gods of battle storm and tempest. They send down the rain. They swim in the waters, which fill up the hollows of the earth (6. 22. 3). Their number enable them to present a sharp front in the battle (*tigma anīka* 4. 27. 7). They are associated with Indra and Parjanya (6. 122. 5 and 4. 15. 4). Ādityas were united with the Maruts without bearing any enmity (6. 74. 3). They are the udders of the Bull, Indra (4. 11. 4). They are the teeth of the sacrificial bull (9. 7. 3). The Maruts come yearly in their season, singing well for and dwelling wide. They are humane in their nature. They are vigorous, jovial and revelling (7. 77. 3). They enjoy the sweets together. Rohita listens to their music (13. 1. 13).

Parjanya, Vāta and Maruts are closely associated in the manifestation of one phenomenon, i.e., the rain. Parjanya is the thundering rain cloud. Vāta is the forcible wind in the rainy season. Maruts with their large number and wide residence blow wind vigorously and bring down the rain. Sound made by them in blowing forcibly is their song. They are good singers.

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 1. 1. 1. On 4. 27. 1 he refers to their number as 49.

[2] *PPP* considers their father to be Rudra.

They are invoked in a number of rites. They favour the breathing, expiration, life-time and bring brilliancy and welfare (19. 45. 10). They confer long life (8. 1. 2). They sprinkle the singer with progeny and wealth (7. 33. 1). They protect the worshipper from deadly weapons (6. 93. 3). They lead the worshipper to success (5. 3. 3). At a sacrifice they are invoked to be gracious; so that the enemy should not find out the sacrificer and his imprecations should have no effect on him (1. 20. 1). They are invoked to advance the progress of the worshippers, to be kind to their bodies and to give happiness to their children (1. 26. 3-4). They grant to the singer, vigour (2. 29. 5). In the battle rite they are invoked to go forward against the enemy and kill them, for they are quite formidable to perform this task (3. 1. 2). On the battle-field Indra infatuates the army of the enemy and the Maruts kill them with vigour (3. 1. 6). With the army Indra and Maruts go as their chief (3. 19. 6). The Maruts are all knowing or all possessing. They harness a king, who is newly restored to the throne with his responsibility (3. 3. 1). In restoring an exiled king, they call back the king and make him the ruler again (3. 4. 4). The Maruts causing the rain to drop down on the earth are vitally connected with agriculture and fertility of soil. The furrows of the tilled earth are anointed with ghee and honey by them (3. 17. 9). They make the waters rich in milk, herbs propitious, when they become active and stir about. The gold-breasted and manly Maruts lavish sustenance and good-will with their honey (6. 22. 2-3). The rain comes due to the favour of the Maruts (4. 15. 15). In their first attempts to tend their minds to agriculture, the Aryans were favoured by Indra and the Maruts. The gods sowed barley with honey on the banks of the Sarasvatī. Indra was their furrow-maker and the liberal Maruts were the ploughmen (6. 30. 1). They are also invoked to secure success for a newly harnessed horse. The Maruts are called upon to harness it (6. 92. 1). In a charm for compelling the love of a man, the love-torn beloved entreats the Maruts to madden the lover for her (6. 130. 4). In the rite for the construction of a new house they are called upon to sprinkle the new house with ghee, i.e. water (3. 12. 4.)

It will thus be seen that the Maruts are the gods of tempest or storm. They are also battle gods. They enrich the soil and make it suitable for cultivation. Thus they are also the gods of fertility and love. Their connection in a love spell is interesting, for the showers of rain are like the arrows dischaged by lovers against the hearts of their beloveds.

## (6) Parjanya

Parjanya is a deity, presiding over the rain. He urges the rain to come down. He naturally is a fertilizer of the earth and beings on it. So the Atharvaṇic poet calls Parjanya as their father and Pṛthivi

as their mother (12. 1. 12). Bhumi is thus the wife of Parjanya (12. 1. 42). The cow Vaśā is also the wife of Parjanya (10. 10. 6). Parjanya is the udder of the rain-cow and the lightnings her teats. Thus the celestial cow yields milk in the form of the rain. The rain water is often spoken of as milk (10. 10. 7). Indra is identified with a bull. Though masculine he yields streams of water in the form of Parjanya. Thus the Atharvaṇic poet conceives of the relation between Indra and Parjanya. Parjanya is the outburst of rain, controlled by Indra[1] (4. 11. 4). At 4. 15 there is a graphic description of the advent of the rains. All moisture-laden clouds gather together in all directions. The great Bull (Parjanya) enveloped in clouds (who are like cows) goes on roaring and the rain drops down. The cows low for the Bull (4. 15. 1). The Maruts with their whole team, sing for Parjanya and roar separately. There is then the downpour of the rain (4. 15. 4). Parjanya roars and thunders, sets the sea in agitation and sprinkles the earth with his rains. Lonely cowherd boys hasten to their homes with their lean cows (4. 15. 6). Parjanya is also spoken of as a mighty horse and rain as his seed (4. 15. 11). He is also described as 'our Asura Father' (4. 15. 12).

Parjanya thunders and roars to thrive the herbs and to fertilize their seeds (8. 7. 21). Parjanya is much nourishing (*bhūridhāyas* 1. 2. 1), and having hundredfold virile power (1. 3. 1). Parjanya is the father of the arrow or reed, which is employed in the magic charms, on account of its rapid growth in the rainy season.[2] When the ocean roars and Parjanya thunders, a golden drop is born and from that *darbha* is born (19. 30. 5).

Parjanya is invoked in many charms. He is asked to protect the poets in their addresses to gods (6. 4. 1).

Parjanya contains brilliancy. The fortunate goddess, who gave birth to Indra is invoked to bestow that brilliancy on the singer (6. 38. 3). Parjanya pacifies the flesh-eating fire. When a dead body is burnt, the rain extinguishes the fire (3. 21. 10). Parjanya is called upon to relieve the singer from distress (11. 6. 6) and to bring bliss and progeny to him (19. 10. 10). The Atharvaṇic poet realizes that owing to Parjanya he has chances to live long. His evils, and Yakṣma will go away and he will enjoy long life. He says 'with Parjanya's rain we have stood immortal'. (3. 31. 11).

### (7) VĀTA

The word occurs about 100 times in the AV. Vāta is a deity of the atmosphere (*antarikṣa*). The word also means 'wind in the body'.[3]

[1] Cf. MACDONELL, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 85. It is not only in the Mahābhārata that the identification between Indra and Parjanya is found, but also in the AV.

[2] *See* GRIFFITH, AV, p. 3.

[3] Cf. BLOOMFIELD, *SBE*, Vol. XLII, p. 246. Cf. also the term *vāta vyādhi*. WISE, *Hindu System of Medicine*, p. 250, also *AJP*, XII, p. 427.

ZIMMER takes the word to mean 'wound'.[1] But his idea does not appear to be convincing, in view of the fact that the word is used in the AV to refer to wind either in the atmosphere or in the body.[2] Lightning is caused by wind (by the clouds dashing against each other being driven by wind) (1. 12. 1). Madhukaśā (Aśvin's whip of honey) is born of Vāta (9. 1. 1). He blows in the atmosphere (2. 10. 4), which is guarded by him (2. 12. 1). Vāta is the *prāṇa* or breath in the bodies (5. 9. 7). He is called *prāṇa* (11. 4. 15). There are Agnis (lightning) in Vāta (3. 21. 7). Clouds are urged by Vāta and thus he is in the company of Parjanya and Maruts in the discharge of rain (4. 15. 1). There is splendour or brilliancy in Vāta (6. 38. 3). He resides in Skambha (10. 7. 12). He is fixed up in Candramas (11. 7. 2). Of the highest Brahman, Vāta is *prāṇa* and *apāna* (10. 7. 34). When *puruṣa* (man) was first fashioned Vāta shared his breath. He blows through Kāla (Eternal Time) (19. 54. 2). Thus it is easy to observe that Vāta is connected with atmosphere and atmosperic deities such as Parjanya and Maruts and at the same time he is the vital breath in the bodies of beings. From medical point of view Vāta is the wind in the limbs of the body such as stomach and others.

Vāta produces *śnṣma*[3] (lightning) which causes headache and cough (1. 12. 3). Vāta has a number of wives. They are prayed to remove heriditary diseases such as consumption and others (2. 10. 4). The names or the number of his wives is not given. As the vital breath of a person is Vāta, life of a dangerously ill person, is brought back from Vāta by means of a spell (8. 2. 3). Vāta therefore is often invoked to protect a person with his *prāṇa* (19. 27. 2). If the heart of a person is weak, Vāta is prayed to blow himself in the heart of a person[4] (8. 1. 5). In the *vājīkaraṇa* rite to make the generative organ more powerful, Vāta is invoked. Vāta strengthened the generative organ of Tāyādara (a kind of animal) (6. 72. 2). Diseases are caused by the disturbance of wind, one of the three humours of body. For the *vātīkṛta* diseases such as rheumatism or wound (according to ZIMMER), *viṣāṇikā* plant (thorny 6. 44. 3) or *pippili* is very effective (6 109. 3). Vāta purifies a person by his breaths (6. 62. 1). Water thunderbolts (magical waters) are sharpened by Vāta (10. 5. 29). Vāta is the soul of *lakṣā* plant (5. 5. 7). Vāta pacifies the flesh-eating fire (3. 21. 10). The Śaṅkha amulet is born of Vāta (4. 10. 1). In the battle rites also Vāta is helpful. Indra confounds the army of the enemy with the blast of wind (3. 1. 5). The Atharvaṇic poet attributes the quickness of Vāta to the magical power of *phāla* amulet, tied by Bṛhaspati on Vāta. This yields strength to him (10. 6. 11-17).

[1] Cf. *Altindischen Laben*, p. 390.
[2] Cf. AV 6. 44. 3.
[3] *See* BLOOMFIELD, *JAOS*, Vol. XVI, p. 35.
[4] This seems to be something like pumping air in the lungs of a patient.

The Vātas are the arrows of the gods 'piercing' by name in the north. They are prayed to protect the singer (3. 26. 4). He fulfils the singer's desires (5. 3. 3). He grants happiness (7. 72. 1). Vāta and Viṣṇu are invoked to confer wealth on the singer (3. 20. 7). The Vātas (pl.) also grant wealth (1. 15. 1). Vāta and Parjanya are prayed to favour the singer (6. 93. 3). They also killed a serpent (*ahi*) (10. 4. 16).

### (8) Vāyu

The word Vāyu occurs about 50 times in the AV.

Vāyu like Vāta is also a deity of the atmosphere. Vāyu is the lord of atmosphere (5. 24. 8). Antarikṣa is the cow, Vāyu is the calf (4. 39. 4). Vāyu is easily invoked. He comes to the worshipper with his eleven or twenty-two or thirty-three, separately yoked mares[1] (7. 4. 1). Vāyu is the lord of breath (*prāṇa*), atmosphere and birds (6. 10. 2). Rohita is Vāyu (13. 4. 3). He is also born of Vāyu, who in turn is born of Rohita (13. 7. 4).

There seems to be a close association between Vāyu and the cattle (*paśus*). Vāyu keeps the cattle together (6. 141. 1). He is prayed to give freedom to *paśus* of every shape, varied in colour and manifoldedly of one form (2. 34. 4). He is actually mentioned to be a companion of *paśus* (2. 26. 1). He thus refreshes them in their grazing grounds. He keeps the cattle together (6. 141. 1).

Vāyu is invoked to kill the haters of the worshipper by means of his lustre, heat and brightness (2. 20). In the *godāna* rite, Vāyu comes with water to shave the beard (6. 68. 1). In a charm to destroy the rival sacrificers, Vāyu is invoked. Those, who offer from atmosphere and assail from that region for harming Vāyu, are turned down and smashed by means of the spell of the Atharvaṇic poets (4. 40. 6). Vāyu takes the worshippers to that place where the knowers of the *brahman* go and endows them there with breath (*prāṇa* 19. 43. 2). In the rite for destroying the enemy in battle-field, Vāyu is called upon to bend the arrow-head of the enemies and thus to make them incapable of fighting (11. 10. 16). Vāyu purifies Soma by means of his strainer (6. 5. 11). In a charm for putting on triple amulet, Vāyu is asked to protect the person by means of spells (19. 27. 1). Vāyu protects the worshipper by means of an enclosure on all sides (3. 20. 10).

Vāyu and other deities fix up a new dwelling (3. 12. 4). Indra and Vāyu are invoked to make the members of an assembly favourable and benevolent to the priest and make them inclined to give gifts to him (3. 20. 10). Vāyu along with Soma and Agni protect the singer (6. 53. 1). Vāyu, Varuṇa and Agni bestow a great kingdom on a king (3. 8. 1). Vāyu is invoked to protect the singer with the atmosphere (19. 17. 2). One whole Mṛgāra hymn (4. 25), glorifies Vāyu and

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa, who interprets *viyuts* as *vaḍavas*.

Savitṛ, rather a rare combination. Their counsels are respected by all. They enter and protect all that has life. They encompass all things in this world (4. 25. 1). They have counted up the expanse of the earth. They fixed up *rajas* (sky) in the *antarikṣa* (mid-region). None reaches their progress (4. 25. 2). Vāyu and Savitṛ are of beautiful lustre. In conformity with their course, people take rest. They are invoked to defend beings (4. 25. 3). They drive away all evil acts, demons and Śimidā[1] and bring refreshment and strength to the people (4. 25. 4). They are praised to confer wealth, prosperity, skill on the singer. They free the worshipper from consumption (4. 25. 5). They render help. They enjoy the intoxicating Soma. They come from the height[2] (4. 25. 6). In the domain of these two gods, excellent blessings wait upon the singer (4. 25. 7). In this whole hymn, Vāyu and Savitṛ are praised to free the singer from distress. The point in grouping these two deities together seems to be in their common functions. Vāyu dominates the human body as *prāṇa* and Savitṛ rules the whole world by permeating it.[3]

Vāyu and Vāta are the deities of atmosphere. Vāta is associated with atmospheric and bodily wind. He is the *prāṇa* of all kings. Vāyu on the other hand is more or less a pastorial deity. His connection with *paśus* bears out this point. So there is a slight difference between the spheres of activities of these deities.

## VII

### THE SOCIAL DEITIES

Vrātya, Atithi and Brahmacārin are three social deities of the Atharvaṇic poets. By social deities I mean the deified persons in the society. Vrātya hailing from the fold outside the orthodox Aryans, is admitted into the Aryan fold. He is deified and is expected to demand reverence from the orthodox Aryans. Atithi is a guest. Hospitality shown to him is on par with the performance of sacrifice.* Brahmacārin practices the *brahman*. With the Atharvaṇic significance of the *brahman* (spell), one can easily understand the high status and importance, enjoyed by Brahmacārin in the AV. These three deities are the innovations of the Atharvaṇic poets. These three form a part of a grand scheme of the Atharvaṇic poets and thinkers to broaden the basis of the Atharvaṇic religion, on sympathetic considerations. In the society of the Atharvavedic times, the poets called upon people to show hospitality to guests coming to the house, to revere one who practises the *brahman* and to pay homage to the wandering respectable

[1] A female demon or disease. Cf. GRIFFITH on 4. 25. 4.

[2] Sāyaṇa and GRIFFITH take differently 'Direct the singer to the excellent wealth'.

[3] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 4. 24. 1., 2. 4. 2., 3. 7. 7.

Vrātyas, who were newly admitted into the Aryan fold. This they did by deifying all these three and asked the people to revere them. Thus one can understand *raison d'etre* of the 15th book of the AV about the Vrātyas, and the deification of Atithi and Brahmacārin. The Atharvaṇic thinkers, who were also poets, treated the hospitality shown to Atithi as a sacrifice and showed the people a simple way of getting the fruit of the sacrifices which must have been not within the reach of an average man of the society. Brahmacārin by his practice of the *brahman* (spells) must have overawed and demanded respect from the public.

### (1) Vrātya

The 15th Book of the AV deals with Vrātya entirely. The book consists of 18 *paryāya-sūktas*. It is on the style of the Brāhmaṇas. Such phrases as '*brahmavādino vadanti*' '*ya evaṁ veda*' and the mention of the fruit of the performance are often repeated.[1] Mysterious comparisons and identifications are also found here.[2] The word Vrātya occurs about 60 times in the AV. The word does not occur elsewhere in the AV except in the 15th book. Vrātya is a deity of this book.[3] Vrātya is deified and praised accordingly.

*Vrātya*: His origin. Vrātya was there in the beginning. He is not created by any agency, human or divine.[4] He stirred about. He urged Prajāpati to action. Prajāpati saw gold in himself.[5] He produced that. This may be the golden egg. That became one, unique, great, chief, Brahman, fervour and truth. From that Vrātya was born (15. 1. 1-3). Thus Vrātya, though existed in the beginning of creation, through the gold (or golden egg) of Prajāpati along with Brahman was born. He became great. He became the great god Mahādeva. He encompassed the lordship of the gods and himself became Īśāna (the Lord). He became the sole Vrātya. He took the bow of Indra for himself. Its interior was blue and back red. With blue he envelops his detested rivals and with red he pierces the men who hate him (15. 1. 6-8). Vrātya thus became the highest Brahman, Mahādeva, Īśāna and the sole Vrātya. He took the bow of Indra. Thus he combines in himself Brahman, Mahādeva and Indra (so far his bow is concerned).

*His movements*: Vrātya then moved to different directions. At this time he had a number of followers and in each direction his equipment also changed.

He went to the east. Bṛhat, Rathantara, Ādityas and Viśvedevas followed him. He got up and went to the south. Yajñayajñīya

[1] Cf. AV. 15. 2. 28, 15. 1. 8, 15. 1. 4. [2] Cf. AV. 15. 10. 5-6.

[3] *Anukramaṇi* mentions it to be '*adhyātma*' book. *Cūlikā Upaniṣad* points out that Vrātya is one of the forms of the *brahmans* praised in the AV.

[4] *PPP.* specifically reads as above. *Ś* recension simply says 'There was Vrātya'.

[5] *PPP.* reads *suparṇa*, eagle for *suvarṇa* of *Ś* recension.

Vāmadevya, sacrifice, sacrificer and cattles followed him. He went to the west. Vairūpa, Vairāja, waters and king Varuṇa followed him. He went to the North. Śyaita, Naudhas, seven sages and Soma followed him.[1] When Vrātya moves he takes with him some equipment. He has a harlot or lewd woman, Māgadha a dissolute bard, garment and a turban. His hair are dressed in a particular way. He has a *pravarta*, rounded ornaments.[2] He puts on a jewel. He has two attendants. He moves in a rough vehicle (*vipatha*). He has a charioteer and a whip (*pratoda*). Vrātya as a person must be having all these things with him whenever he goes out. His personal equipment included a garment, a turban, dressed hair, two bracelets and a jewel. So a Vrātya must be a rich man caring much for his dignity and personal appearance. He has also grandeur while moving. He moves in a car having two attendants and a charioteer. From all this one gets a clear idea about the dignified movements of a Vrātya. His moral character does not seem to be high. He includes in his following, a harlot and dissolute bard. Such is the basis for the deification of a Vrātya. The deified Vrātya has all sanctified surroundings and associations. For instance, when Vrātya moves to the east faith is the harlot, Mitra is the Māgadha, discernment is his garment, day is his turban and night is his hair. His *pravartas* are yellow. Kalmali is his jewel. Past and future are his foot-man. Mind is his vehicle. Wind is his charioteer. Storm is his whip. Thus in an attempt to deify a Vrātya, the poet Atharvan has idealised all surroundings and equipment. Vrātya thus becomes Divine Puruṣa. The poet does not feel anything about the Vrātya's association with a harlot. In idealising his personality, he has made Uṣas as his harlot while he is moving to the South. Thought is his Māgadha. While he is moving to the North food (Irā) is his harlot and laughter is his friend. When he is moving to the North lightning is his harlot and thunder is his friend (15. 2. 1-28). This much is clear from the description of the movements of Vrātya that before Vrātya is deified, his moral behaviour was not above suspicion. When he is turned into a divine being the poet associates with him all grand things in nature and makes him an omnipotent deity.

*His Seat*: For one year Vrātya stood erect. The gods then brought to him a couch. This was an ideal couch. The surface between its feet was made up of cords which were woven together. The cords were *ṛcs* and *yajus*. Thus the two Vedas were employed in making up the feet and the surface of the couch. On the whole, Veda was the sheeting to cover the surface of the couch. The *brahman*

[1] It is to be noted that eight Sāmans followed him. His connection with the Sāmaveda (through its Sāmans) becomes more visible when particularly Tāṇḍya Mahābhrāhmaṇa refers to Vrātya in details.

[2] Cf. *Pet. Lex.* It would rather mean something which urges such as a goad, etc.

(spell, i.e., Atharvaveda) was the matress. Sāma was the seat and *udgītha* was the support. It will thus be seen that the poet wants to employ all four Vedas in the making of the couch for Vrātya. A Vrātya might be sitting on an ordinary couch, but for this divine Vrātya, Atharvan has employed all Vedas in the fashioning of his seat. It is noteworthy that out of the four Vedas employed here, the Ṛc and Yajus form together one cloth. While whole structure, seat and cushion is made up of Sāmans. Sāmaveda is given pre-eminence over all other Vedas here. Vrātya then got on the couch. He had royal dignity. He had footmen, messengers and waiters, but these were the Devajaṇas, thought and all creatures respectively. Thus Vrātya takes his seat on the couch. All gods and creatures wait upon him.

*Protection for him in all directions and intermediate directions*: In the eastern direction two spring months protect him and Bṛhat and Rathantara attend on him. In the south two summer months and two Sāmans, in the west two rain months and two Sāmans, in the north two autumn months and two Sāmans do the work for his protection and attendance respectively. In the firm direction two winter months, Bhūmi and Agni and in the upward direction, two cool months Dyaus and Āditya do the same work. Thus Vrātya is protected by all six seasons in twelve months, eight Sāmans and some deities attend upon him (15. 3. 1-11). In the intermediate directions also he is protected particularly by Rudra in his different aspects. In the eastern intermediate direction Bhava, the archer, is his attendant. Similarly in other intermediate directions Sarva, Paśupati, Ugradeva, Rudra and Mahādeva act as his attendants. In all intermediate directions generally Īśāna, the archer, acts as attendant (15. 5. 1-16).

*His movements in other directions*: He moved with his paraphernalia to the four main directions. Now his movements in other directions are described. He went to the fixed direction. Earth, fire, plants, herbs, trees and shrubs followed him. The fixed direction is the earth. Naturally all things on the earth and the earth itself followed him. He then went to upward direction. *Ṛta*, Truth, the Sun, the Moon and the lunar mansions followed him. These are naturally in the sky, above the earth. In the highest direction, Ṛc, Sāman, Yaju and Brahman (i.e., the Atharvaveda) followed him. This shows that Atharvan considers the Vedas to be above the luminaries in the sky. He has already made the Vedas the seat of Vrātya. He then went to Bṛhati quarter (great direction). There narratives (*itihāsas*), legends (*purāṇas*), songs (*gāthās*) and eulogies (*nārāśaṁsis*) followed him.[1] To the distant direction three sacrificial

[1] The AV knows in addition to four Vedas the following literature: narratives, legends, songs and eulogies. These are the forerunners of the two epics the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. The AV refers to this literature for the first time among the Saṁhitās.

fires, sacrifice, sacrificer and victims followed him. To the unlimited direction, the seasons, groups of season, worlds, months, day and night followed him. To the unreturned quarters Diti, Aditi, Iḍā and Indrāṇī followed him. In all directions Prajāpati, Parameṣṭhin and the Father and the grandfather followed him (15. 6. 1-26).

*Vrātya and Ocean*: The greatness of Vrātya becoming restive went to the end of the earth. It became the ocean. So the ocean is after all the greatness of Vrātya. All great divinities such as Prajāpati, Parameṣṭhin, the Father and Grandfather, Water and Faith becoming rain followed him. These divinities thus associated themselves with Vrātya in becoming rain. Faith, sacrifice, world, food and eatables turned about him (15. 7. 1-5).

*Vrātya and Rājanya*: Vrātya was filled with passion and from him sprung up the Rājanya, a nobleman.[1] He arose to the tribes (*viśaḥ*—people) kinsmen, food and cattle. He moved towards the people. Assembly, gathering (*sabhā* and *samiti*) army and wine followed him. Thus the kingship is born out of Vrātya. Naturally all associates of the kingship follow Vrātya. There thus used to be meetings and gatherings of people. Army was well equipped and it was associated with wine. So it seems that the people in the army may be given to drinking sometimes. The kingship being an outcome of Vrātya, a king should treat Vrātya with great respect. He should treat Vrātya as superior to himself. Thus he does not offend against dominion or royalty. Priesthood and royalty sprang up from Vrātya, and they entered in different places. The Brahman (priesthood) entered in Bṛhaspati, who is the same as Pṛthivī or Agni. Royalty entered in Indra who is the same as Dyaus or Āditya (15. 7, 8, 9, 10). Thus the poet tells us that both Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas were produced from Vrātya. They are the counterpart of the celestial kingship and priesthood represented by Indra and Bṛhaspati, respectively. They are on the same relation as the earth and heaven, or Agni and Āditya, who supplement each other. Thus Brahman and Kṣatra are related to each other and are not at variance with each other. They have a common source and are set up in this world to help each other (15. 10. 1-11).

*Vrātya and hospitality*:[2] If Vrātya comes to the house of one who knows the greatness of Vrātya, the householder should treat him well. He should ask, 'Oh Vrātya, where did you stay last?', 'Here is water'. 'Let these waters gratify you'. 'Do as you please' 'Do as you will'. 'Do as you desire'. The householder gets the fruit of this hospitality to Vrātya. It may be noted that Vrātya treated here is actually a person and not one in the capacity of the supreme creator. He thus comes to the householder as a guest and the poet expects

[1] *See* MUIR, *OST*, Vol. I, p. 22.

[2] AV 15. 11-13 sections are also found in the form of a summary in the *Apastambha dharma sūtra* 11. 3. 7. 13-17. See *SBE*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 118-19.

every householder to treat him as cordially as possible. Sometimes Vrātya may come to the house of a person when the fires are taken up and offering to them has begun. The house-holder should get up and ask his permission to carry on the sacrifice and then only he should continue, otherwise he should not. Thus Vrātya commands the household of the person and the sacrifice should not go on, unless he orders it. On another occasion Vrātya may come to stay in the house of a person for the night. The householder should not refuse him place for sleeping, etc. If Vrātya sleeps in his house for 1, 2, 3 or 4 nights he gets holy realms in the east, sky, heaven or purest of the pure worlds respectively. It is always possible, according to the poet, that someone may call himself a Vrātya, though himself is not, and may come to the householder to secure his hospitality. The householder may or may not drag him out of his house. If he does not drive him out, he should treat him as a deity and whatever is done to Vrātya is acceptable to the deity. Thus Vrātya should be treated as a deity anyhow (15. 11-13). In these sections (15. 11-13) Vrātya is a human being and is treated as a deity.

*Further movements of Vrātya*: He moved to the east. The troops of Maruts coming into being, went after him making mind as the eater of the food. To the south, west and north he went, when Indra, Varuṇa and Soma making strength, waters and seven sages as the eaters of food respectively. Similarly he went to the firm direction, Viṣṇu following him making Virāj, the eater of food. Thus to the manes, men, gods and people he went. Yama, Agni, Īśāna and Prajāpati followed him. He went to the intermediate quarters. Parameṣṭhin followed him and the Brahman became the eater of food (15. 14. 1-24).

*The Divine Vrātya*: The right eye of Vrātya is the sun and left is the moon. His right ear is Agni and left is Pavamāna. His nostrils are day and night. His head and skull are Diti and Aditi. By day he is turned to the east and by night to the west (15. 18. 1-5). His Prāṇas, Apānas and Vyānas are seven each. Each of them is identified with some deity. His seven Prāṇas are: Agni, Āditya, Candramas, Pavamāna, Āpaḥ, Paśus, Prajāḥ and they have separate names (15. 15. 1-9). His seven Apānas are identified with seven sacrificial details. These are: Paurṇamasī, Aṣṭakā, Amāvāsyā, Śraddhā, Dīkṣā, Yajña and Dakṣiṇā. His seven Vyānas are earth, sky, heaven, lunar mansions, seasons, groups of seasons (or those belonging to seasons) and year. The gods go about with the same purpose. The seasons go after the year and Vrātya (15. 15-17).

From the description of Vrātya given above, it can be easily noticed that in this book of Vrātya, there are clearly two different types of Vrātyas. In all the 18 *paryāyas*, all except 11-13 *paryāyas*, deal with Vrātya as a divine being. He is not a created being. He was there in the beginning. Still his birth is suggested through the

gold of Prajāpati along with the Brahman. He became the sole lord and sole Vrātya. In his movements there is a royal grandeur. Even in this description of his movements his original character of being associated with a harlot and a Māgadha is not concealed. Though the poet has tried to identify the harlot with Faith, Uṣas and other deities, his former associations with a harlot and a Māgadha are easily discernable. As a majestic and dignified lord Vrātya must have a dignified couch to sit upon. This seat also is idealized. All four Vedas serve in the fashioning of his couch. All gods and creatures wait upon him when he takes his seat on his couch. He is protected in the four main directions by the months of the year and the Sāmans. In all intermediate directions, he is protected by all aspects of Rudra. In his movement in other directions, earthly and heavenly objects followed him. Even the four Vedas, Itihāsa, Purāṇa, Gāthā and Nārāsaṁsis followed him. His greatness occupied the whole earth and when it went to its (earth's) end, it became ocean. Vrātya produced the kingship, which is inferior to himself. Priesthood and royalty arose out of Vrātya and are helpful to each other. He moved to the different directions where all important gods such as Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, Yama, Īśāna etc., followed him. The main point in all these descriptions is to emphasize the superiority of Vrātya to all these deities. The sun, the moon, Agni etc., form the various limbs of his body. So they are all within him. In his seven Prāṇas, Apānas and Vyānas all deities are included.

Such is the greatness of Vrātya. In the *paryāyas* 11-13. Vrātya appears to be a human being. His greatness is there. Yet, he may go to the house of a person for food, water and for sleeping at night. He is a mendicant, wandering from place to place, begging food and shelter. Only point that emerges out of the description is that Vrātya when comes to a person as a guest, should not be treated lightly. He should be divinely treated. Thus in all 18 *paryāyas*, in 1-9 and 14-18 *paryāyas*, he is treated as a Divine Being, like the Brahman, as the Lord of great grandeur and dignity. In the *paryāyas* 10-13 he is treated as a wandering mendicant of a dignified and respectable form.

Thus in the Vrātya book of the AV, two types of the Vrātyas are noticed, one as a Divine Being and other as a *brahmacārin*. It is to be seen what exactly the word Vrātya means.

The word Vrātya occurs in the Saṁhitā (excluding the AV) and Brāhmaṇa literature about ten times and twice in the Upaniṣads. It does not occur in the RV and SV Saṁhitās. In the Taittirīya Saṁhitā[1] Vrātya occurs as one of the victims in the human sacrifice. He seems to be more closely connected with the school of the Sāmaveda Brāhmaṇas. In the Jaiminīya-upaniṣad-brāhmaṇa (11. 2. 6,

[1] *See* TS. 30. 8.

14. 4. 1 and 1. 2. 3. 9), the Vrātyas occur as Divine Beings. They are in plural (*divyāḥ vrātyāḥ*). There Pṛthu, the son of Vena, asks some questions about the mysterious significance of Oṁ and Udgītha. At JB 3. 5. 2. 3 the words Vrātya and Ekavrātya occur. So it seems that the Divine Vrātyas were large in number and one of them was the chief. Really important information about Vrātyas is found in Tāṇḍya-mahā-brāhmaṇa[1] (17. 1-4). It is told there that the gods went to *svarga* and some of them (*daiva*, attendants of gods) still lingered behind on the earth, under the form of Vrātyas.[2] Desirous of meeting the gods in heaven, they came to place whence the Devas ascended the heaven, but not knowing the hymn and metre required for this purpose, they did not know what to do. The gods then sent Maruts to teach them (Vrātyas) the required hymn and metre, so that by their use they can come to the heaven. The Maruts taught them the hymn called Ṣoḍaṣī and the metre, *ānuṣṭup*.[3] The gods on the earth, then learning the hymn ascended to the heaven. The *hīna* or depressed Vrātyas are those, who neither practise *brahmacārya*, nor can till the land, nor carry on trade. *Ṣoḍaṣa stoma* has the power to elevate them (TMB 17. 1. 2). The Sāman is called *dyautana* because the chief house-holder (*gṛhapati*) of the depressed gods was one by name Dyautana, who belonged to the Maruts. The TMB goes on further describing the deficiency of the depressed class. These are called the *gargir* (those swallowing poison), who eat the food to be eaten by the Brāhmaṇas, who though not abused complain of being abused, who punish those who do not deserve punishment, and who though not initiated speak the language of the initiated.[4] The TMB further describes the ceremony of the converting the Vrātya into the Brahmanical fold. The Vrātya house-holder who desires to perform this sacrifice should secure a turban, a whip, a small bow, a rough wagon covered with planks,[5] a garment with black border, two goat skins (one black and one white), and silver ornament.[6] The followers of the *gṛhapati* had garments with red borders, two borders on each, and shoes black and pointed. This is the property of the Vrātyas. It should be given to a nominal Brāhmaṇa of Magadha country,[7] who forever lives according to the Vrātya-style of living. By this rite they are elevated to the rank of the Aryans. Thirty-three Vrātyas attained,

[1] *See* BHAGAVAT, "*A chapter from the Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa of the Sāmaveda.*" *JBBRAS* XIX, 357-64.

[2] Sāyaṇa in his commentary on TMB 17. 1 explains the word Vrātya as *ācārahīna*, fallen from the right conduct or practice.

[3] Sāyaṇa remarks in the comment on *TMB* 17. 1. 1, that *ṣoḍaṣa stoma* is to be used in the sacrifice by the Vrātyas (*vrātya stoma*).

[4] Cf. *TMB* 17. 1. 9 *adīkṣitā dīkṣitavacaṁ vadanti.*

[5] *See* MACDONELL and KEITH, *Vedic Index* Vol. II, p. 343.

[6] *Niṣka*: Sāyaṇa takes it to be a silver ornament. BHAGVAT takes it to be a coin. Also *see* BHAGVAT, *loc. cit.*

[7] *See* Sāyaṇa on TMB 17. 1. 16: *brahmabandhu Māgadhadeśīyāya.*

with their chief to the elevation in the Aryan-fold. Sāyaṇa[1] explains the way of life of the Vrātyas in the following manner. The Vrātyas are those who put on a turban on their heads, which they put on one side. They carry a whip in their hands and a small bow without arrows, by means of which they trouble the people. They ride in carts covered with planks of wood and drawn by horses or mules. They wear on their bodies white garments with black borders or garments made of wool with red stripes or sheep skin. They use silver ornaments. Sāyaṇa[2] points out that there are four classes of Vrātyas. They are: *nindita*, *kanīyas*, *jyāyas* and *hīna*. *Nindita* is a condemned criminal. *Kanīyas* is a young Aryan, who returns after a short stay among the non-Aryans. *Jyāyas* is one who spends his life among the non-Aryans and returns home in old age.[3] The *jyāyas* is further described as one who has wrecked his health by reckless intercourse with women in the country of the outcastes and has come to his home in old age.[4] In the Cūlikā Upaniṣad (5. 11), Vrātya is a divinity along with Brahmacārin and others. Praśna Upaniṣad (2. 11) refers to Vrātya as the great sage.

Coming to the Sūtra literature, one notices another aspect of the meaning of the word Vrātya. Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra 1. 8. 16. 16 quotes a verse from Manu Smṛti (10. 20) to mean that those sons, whom an uninitiated man begets, are called the Vrātyas by the wise. These Vrātyas are excluded from the recitation of the Sāvitrī.[5] At 1. 9. 17. 15 Baudhāyana points out that Vrātyas are those who are sprung up from an intermixture of castes. The Lātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra (8. 6) of the Sāmaveda informs about the details of the Vrātya-sacrifice. The Vrātyas desirous of coming into Brahmanical fold should select their Gṛhapati and along with other thirty-three Vrātyas should enter into the Brahmanical fold and then they are not required to undergo any penance for learning the Vedas or for partaking of food with other Brāhmaṇas. Apastaṁbha Dharma Sūtra (2. 3. 7. 13-17) makes Vrātya a religious student, who has learnt one recension of the Veda or a faithful fulfiller of his vows.[6] Apastaṁbha[7] refers to a Brāhmaṇa, whose views he is following in his treatment of Vrātya as a guest. It is possible that Apastaṁbha might be treating the AV 15. 11-13 *paryāyas* as a Brāhmaṇa, as the whole book has the outlook of a Brāhmaṇa work.

According to R. R. BHAGVAT[8] the word Vrātya originally denoted a barbarian or non-Aryan people and in the course of time came to be applied to those Aryans who happened or were forced to spend some years of their life among such. The word *samanīcamedhra*

[1] On TMB 17. 1. 14. [2] On TMB 17. 1. 1. [3] Cf. TMB 17. 2. 1, 3. 10.
[4] *See* TMB 17. 4. 1. The word there is *samanīcāmedhra*.
[5] Also Cf. *Manu smṛti* 2. 39. '*sāvitripatitāḥ vrātyāḥ*'.
[6] *See* also GRIFFITH, *Atharvaveda*, Vol. II, p. 193.
[7] Dharma Sūtra, 2. 3. 7. 15. [8] *Loc. cit.*, p. 362.

suggests that some of the Aryans associated themselves too freely with licentious women of the Vrātya community, lost their bloom of life and returned home recked in their body. Gradually those, who degrated themselves by violating the rules of conduct were classed among the Vrātyas. The Vrātya's association with the Māgadha-Brāhmaṇas, who are in name only the Brāhmaṇas, seems to point to their place, i.e., the land of the Magadhas. In the course of time these Vrātyas became extinct, and their memory is preserved in the explanation of the word Vrātya in the Sūtras and Smṛti.

MACDONELL and KEITH[1] consider that out of the four-fold Vrātyas mentioned only one *hīna* class is really important. They were of Aryan blood. They were of one class. They spoke corrupt language probably somewhat Prakṛtic form of speech. They were outside the pale of the Brahmanical culture. ROTH's view[2] is that the Vrātya of the AV is entirely different from that of the Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa. The authors of the *Vedic Index* remark that the view of ROTH is untenable owing to the occurrence of the word like *uṣṇīṣa*, *vipatha*, etc., and that the 15th book of the AV is of a mystical character, exalting the convert Vrātya as a type of perfect Brahmacārin and in so far, of the divinity.

WEBER[3] points out that the word Vrātya is used in the Atharva Upaniṣads in the sense of 'pure in himself' to denote the Supreme Being. The Vrātya (the Indian living outside the pale of Brahmanism) has special relation to Māgadha and harlot. The people and the land of Magadha have been treated with contempt in the AV and along with the word *brahmabandhu* in the Magadha country, connected with the Vrātyas, lead according to WEBER to interprete the *māgadha* of the Vrātya book as a heritical teacher of the Buddhism, who must have existed in Magadha at that time.

BLOOMFIELD[4] opines that Vrātya seems to be a kind of a *brahmacārin*, who has entered the Brahmanical community after having been converted from an Aryan, but non-Brahmanical tribe. There is obvious connection between Vrātya book and Vrātya Stoma. The Vrātya thus converted is emphatically the representative of the Brahman, like the Brahmacārin (11. 5), he apotheosized. Thus the views of the scholars on this subject turn on the derivation of the word Vrātya. One view seems to derive it from the word *vrata*, following the vow of celebacy etc., and other to derive it from the word *vrāta* (a roaming band) and therefore the word means 'one belonging to a roving band, a vagrant'. To sum up the discussion, it can be said that in the RV and SV Saṁhitas there is no mention of the Vrātyas. In the YV Saṁhitā the word occurs in the list of the persons to be sacrificed. In the AV

[1] *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 343.
[2] *St. Petersberg Dictionary* referred to by the Vedic Index.
[3] *The History of Indian Literature*, pp. 112, 147.
[4] *The Atharvaveda*, p. 94.

there is an entire book to glorify Vrātya. His association with Māgadha as his *mitra* and *mantra*, etc., seems to be scandalous, as the AV speaks of the Māgadhas not in favourable terms. Fever is wished to go away to the country of Māgadha and Aṅga.[1] Latyāyana Śrauta Sūtra (8. 6), mentions the resident of Māgadhas is not dignified way (*brahmabandhumāgadhadeśīya*). Māgadha is a class born of a Śūdra begetting on a female of the Vaiśya caste.[2] Māgadha is in later times a minstrel.[3] The dislike for the Māgadhas was in all probability due, to the fact that they were not fully Brahmanised.[4] In the 15th book of the AV, there are, as I have noticed above, two aspects of Vrātya: One as Supreme Being and other as a religious mendicant. In the TMB four types of Vrātyas are mentioned, viz , *hīna*, *nindita*, *kanīyas*, and *jyāyas*. There are sacrifices for the conversion of these four types of the Vrātyas. It is also important to note that the characteristic dress to be put on by the Vrātya, who desires conversion, is actually alluded to in the AV 15. 2. The Atharvaṇic poet in his zeal to deify Vrātya could not conceal his characteristic equipment. His harlot, turban, hair, Māgadha, rough cart, garment, whip, etc., are all symbolized in the AV. Thus there is no doubt that the Vrātya of the TMB is the same as glorified in the AV. Manu assigns the origin of the Vrātya to be from an uninitiated person. His explanation of Vrātya, as fallen from Sāvitrī, also points to the fact that some persons were not keen on following the Brahmanical traditions and culture, and that they remained without those *samskāras* (such as *upanayana* and others). As such these persons fell off from the Brahmanical fold. They must have led some sort of irresponsible life, particularly in their relation with women. Thus they became still more depressed in their social status from the point of the Brahmanical orthodoxy. Some generations also must have passed like this without their inclusion into the Brahmanical fold. Thus Vrātya became an inferior caste. These Vrātyas are thus Aryan in their origin and yet led a depressed state of life. In the course of time they, themselves or some responsible members of the Brahmanical orthodoxy must have felt the need for their conversion into their fold again. There were mass conversions, the minimum number of the Vrātyas required for such conversion being thirty-three and their *gṛhapati* (the leader).[5] These Vrātyas of *hīna* type did not care to observe *brahmacarya* (celibacy), but they led a house-holder's life and some members of their community were pious persons, for such persons were chosen to be their *gṛhapatis* (leaders). Now, after their conversion they were included into the Aryan-fold and would observe the Brāhmanic traditions and *saṁskāras* (rites). As such they could be perfect Brāhmaṇas also. They would be *brahmacārins* and spend

[1] Cf. AV. 5. 22. 14.
[2] See *Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra*, 1. 9. 17. 7.
[3] Cf. MBH 1. 126.
[4] See OLDENBERG, *Buddha*, p. 400.
[5] Cf. TMB 17. 1. 17.

their life in wandering and studying the Vedas. They would command respect from the people and would be superior to the Rājanyas. Atharvan, the traditional seer of the 15th book of the AV thus wants to impress this fact that even a converted Vrātya (who retains his designation as Vrātya) by means of his individual greatness, austerity and religious behaviour can be the Supreme Being and the ruler of the world and as a mendicant wandering from place to place inspire awe in the mind of the people. Not all Vrātyas can be thus elevated to the level of the Highest Being and dignity of a spiritual ruler; yet some of these converted Vrātyas, by their religious behaviour could rise to such a high state. This seems to be the purpose of the Vrātya Book in the AV. As I have shown elsewhere,[1] the Āṅgirasas and Bhṛgus, the sponsors of the AV, are the reformists among the Brahmaṇical orthodoxy and they have a tendency to enlarge the fold of Brahmanism, perhaps to check the tide of the heterodox thought-waves. Thus one can easily realize the significance of the glorification of the Vrātya in the AV.

## (2) Atithi

The word Atithi occurs about 30 times in the AV. Atithi is the deity of the 6th Sūkta of the 9th Book of the AV. He is identified with the Brahman.

Atithi is the Brahman, directly visible. The Brahman has the joints of the body in the form of the preparation for the compositions of the hymns. His spine is the *ṛcs*. His hair are the chants.[2] His heart is the sacrificial prose formulas, *the yajus*. His covering is the oblation. The Brahman, made up of the three Vedas and covered with the sacrificial offerings, is nothing but Atithi (9. 6. 1-2). Hospitality, shown to a guest or guests, who are identical with the Brahman, is an act of sacrifice. Hence the various stages in the treating of a guest are compared with various acts in a sacrifice.

When a host looks at the guests, he looks at the place of offering sacrifice to the gods. He then speaks to the guests. His act is on par with the consecration at the beginning of a sacrifice. He calls for water. It is bringing forward the sacrificial water. When the host brings forth gratification, he is actually binding an animal for Agni and Soma. The act of preparing his lodging is on the same level with the preparation of *sadas*[3] and the place for keeping oblations. The host then covers the floor of the room assigned to the guest. This act is compared with the spreading of the sacred grass, the *barhiḥ*. By bringing in the bed, the host secures the heaven. On the bed he puts matress and pillow. These are nothing but the

[1] *The Authorship of the Mahābhārata, JUB*, 1943 Vol. XII, ii.

[2] *PPP* reads *chandānsi* for *sāmāni*.

[3] A seat of gods. A chamber constructed to the east of *prācīnavaṁśa* chamber, which has the supporting beam inclined to the east.

*paridhis* (the enclosures) of the sacrifice. The guest is given ointment and unguent, which act is identical with ghee. To create foretaste, the host offers to him a sample of the preparations of food. This is the offering of two *puroḍāśa* cakes. He then calls the cook, who prepares food and who is like one who prepares oblation. Rice and barley grains are sifted out. They are nothing but the shoots of Soma. The mortar and pestle are like the stones for pressing the stalks of Soma. The winnowing basket is the strainer for Soma. The husk is the Soma-dregs. The water used for cooking is that which is required in pressing Soma. The spoon is the sacrificial spoon. The fork and stirring prongs are those used in sacrifice. The kettles are the wooden vessels. The drinking vessels are those of Vāyu. This earth is the black antelope's skin (9. 6. 1-17). It will thus be noticed that the reception to a guest is on par with the sacrifice, which is the Brahman, made up of the three Vedas.

The host treating his guest actually occupies the position of a priest of the Yajamāna,[1] when he looks at the food to be offered to the guest saying, 'which is larger?' He then says to the guest, 'Take the larger portion'.[2] He gives the food to him. This is like bringing libations near the fire. The guest eating the food offers libation in himself. His hand is the ladle, his breath is the sacrificial post, and the sound of swallowing[3] the food is the utterance of *vṣaṭ*. The guests—one may like them or not—are like the priests, who make the host go to the heaven. All sins of the host are destroyed, when he treats the guest. The host treating a guest is constantly offering a sacrifice to Prajāpati. The fire in the guest is the *āhavanīya* fire. The fire in the house is the *gārhapatya*. The fire on which the food is cooked is *dakṣiṇa* fire (9. 6. 18-30).

The host should not partake of the meals before the guest has taken meal. If he takes it, he actually swallows what is offered at the sacrifice and outside the sacrifice from the house. He also loses milk and essence, refreshment and prosperity, progeny and cattle, fame and glory, fortune and harmony, of the house. The Atithi is a *śrotrīya* (well-versed in sacred learning). Hence before he takes meals, the host should not eat. He should take it afterwards for the animation and integrity of sacrifice. Particularly the milk or flesh of the cow, which is sweet, he should not partake before the guest (9. 6. 31-39).

The guest should be treated with milk, ghee, honey, and flesh. As the guest is the Brahman, the different articles of food offered to

[1] One who institutes and finances the sacrifice.

[2] *PPP* reads differently. *See* 16. 112. 6-7 (DR. RAGHU VIRA's edn.) 'When the host asks the guest to take up the food, he increases his breath, progeny and cattles. In that he asks the guest to take food as he likes, he is actually sacrificing his *kāma* (passions).

[3] *Sruk* is the sound made in gulping down the food.

the guest are those offered in different sacrifices. A host thus knowing the greatness of Atithi, should present milk to him. Thereby he obtains the fruit of a very successful Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, when he would have offered a sufficient quantity of milk. Thus a sacrificer may offer as much quantity of ghee as required in a well-equipped Atirātra sacrifice and its fruit would be the same as is obtained by offering ghee to the guest. The host in offering honey to the guest wins the fruit of having offered the Satra sacrifice. By offering the flesh to the guest the host secures the fruit of Dvādaśāha sacrifice. He who offers water to the guest secures stability for the continuity of his race and becomes dear to his people (6. 9. 40-44). Thus the offering of milk, ghee, honey and flesh to the guest, who is the visible Brahman, secures for the host the fruit of great sacrifices such as Agniṣṭoma, Atirātra, Satra and a sacrifice lasting for twelve days. The host merely treats the guest with these things and receives the fruit of performance of these sacrifices; for, the Atithi is the Brahman.

A Sāman has five parts, *hiṅkāra*, *prastāva*, *udgītha*, *pratihāra* and *nidhana*. Udgītha is the central part.[1] So the reception of a guest is a recitation of a Sāman. When the host sees the guest, he utters *hiṅg*; when he greets him he preludes (*prastāva*); when he offers water, he sings the *udgītha*; when he presents food, he responds (*pratihāra*). The remnant of his food is the conclusion (*nidhana*). Different deities act as different parts of the Sāman, which is the reception of Atithi. They bring to him progeny, cattle, wealth, etc., (6. 9. 45-48).

The service at the time of meal is also represented as a part of sacrificial procedure. When the host calls the waiter to receive instructions, it is just an *adhvaryu* summoning the *āgnidhra* priest. When the waiter assents, it is like the *āgnidhra* priest replying the call. When the servers, with vessels in their hands in due order go forward they are like the priests, who bear cups of Soma in their hands. All of them are the *hotṛ* priests. Where the food is served in the morning, noon or evening, it is the morning, noon or evening libation.[2] When the host, after serving the guest goes to his house, he is actually taking the *avabhṛta* bath. When he distributes food, he is actually distributing the priestly fees. When he follows the guests, he completes the sacrifice. Like the Brahman, Atithi is omnipresent and may be treated as a guest on the earth, in the atmosphere, sky, gods or worlds. The host secures the worlds rich in light by receiving the guest hospitably (9. 6. 49-62).

It will be noticed that the Atharvaṇic poet is treating a guest or Atithi as the Brahman. All acts of receiving and showing hospitality to the Atithi are considered to be those resorted to in the performance of a sacrifice. Not only that the reception is on par with sacrificial

[1] See *chāndogya upaniṣad*, ii. 2. [2] This is according to *PPP*, 16. 116. 7-8.

ritual, but the milk, ghee, honey and flesh supplied to the guest, conduces the host to the fruit of having performed four different sacrifices. So the poet wants to impress on our minds the duty of the householder in receiving the guest and treating him comfortably, whether he is liked by him or not. The Atharvaṇic poet thus idealizes this reception to the guest and deifies him. Thus Atithi becomes the visible Brahman, and treatment to him is the performance of sacrificial ritual. The poet idealizes the duties of a householder and maintains that even treating a guest in the house and looking after his comforts is on the same level with the performance of various sacrifices, which are laborious, costly and not within the means of an average man. The Atharvaṇic poet, teaches here the simple way of securing the worlds, the heaven and the fruits of different sacrifices by treating a guest. If one looks at this deification from this point of view, one can easily realize the significance of the new Atharvaṇic religion, making the life of an average man in the society, more socially minded, to suit the new conditions of time, when the sacrificial system had not maintained its former glamour and was not within the reach of an average man in the society. The treatment of a Vrātya by the Atharvaṇic poet is only another example of this type.

### (3) Brahmacārin

The word Brahmacārin occurs about 25 times in the AV. He occurs as a deity at 11. 5. Elsewhere the word occurs with its meaning the student of the Vedas. In the hymn 11. 5 a student studying the Vedas is glorified and turned into a divine being.

The Brahmacārin goes on setting the earth and heaven in motion. All gods agree with him. He supports the heaven and the earth. With his penance he fills his teacher. He is thus the cause of the movement and support of the heaven and the earth. His teacher is inspired by his penance (11. 5. 1). He fills the gods with his penance. The Fathers, divine beings, individual gods and the Gandharvas numbering thirty-three, three hundred, or six thousand follow him[1] (11. 5. 2). A student is initiated in the sacred learning by his Ācārya. This rite is called *upanayana*. The teacher receiving the Brahmacārin, keeps him in his stomach as his embryo for three nights. At the end of that period he delivers the pupil, when the gods come to see him. This is his second birth (11. 5. 3). The teacher then asks him to put *samidhs* (fuel) in the sacred fire. This rite is also idealized. The earth and sky are the *samidhs*. He fills the atmosphere with the *samidhs*. He puts on a girdle and exerts in the study of the Vedas. Thus by the *samidhs*, girdle and exertion he fills the world (11. 5. 4). Thus

[1] *PPP* reads differently. It means that all gods, divine beings, and Gandharvas should follow him. He fills with his penance all gods numbering thirty-three, three hundred and six thousand. *Śaunaka* version considers the Gandharvas to be of that number while *PPP* makes the gods to be of that number.

after initiation a new divine being is born. He is born prior to the Brahman. He clothes himself with heat and stands with penance. From him is born the Brāhmaṇa, the highest Brahman and all gods together with immortality. As the Vedas mean the highest Brahman, the Brahmacārin by his study revives the Vedas, which is the same as the birth of the highest Brahman (11. 5. 5). Enkindling the fire with *samidhs*, clothing himself in the black antelope skin, and long bearded, he goes from the eastern to the northern ocean, grasping the worlds (11. 5. 6). The Brahmacārin generates the Brahman, waters, the world, Prajāpati, the most exalted one and Virāj. He becomes the womb of the Immortality and is born as Indra to destroy the Asuras (11. 5. 7). His teacher also fashions heaven and earth and he himself with the agreement of gods protects them (11. 5. 8). He begs alms, which are Bhūmi and Pṛthivī, where in all being are set and which are made by him as fuel. He protects with his fervour the two treasures of the Brahman, deposited in secret on both sides of the sky. He makes them as the Brahman for himself. The Brahmacārin enters with his penance the rays of the two fires meeting between the cloudy regions. Here Brahmacārin is identified with lightning and terrestrial fire (11. 5. 11). Now he is identified as the god of rain. Roaring on, thundering, the red-coloured one, he introduced in the earth a great virile member. He pours seed on the surface of the earth (11. 5. 12). He puts the fuel in the fire, the sun, the moon, Mātariśvan and waters. Man, rain and water are the ghee for the flames that rise in the sky. His teacher is Mṛtyu, Varuṇa, Soma, plants and milk. The clouds were the warriors, who brought the heavenly light (11. 5. 13-14). His teacher, Prajāpati and Virāj were Brahmacārins. By practice of the *brahman* (*brahmacarya*) a king protects his kingdom (11. 5. 17). By the practice of the *brahman* a girl wins a young husband; by that the gods won over death. Indra brought heaven for the gods by means of the practice of the *brahman*. The Brahmacārin thus creates herbs, past and future, forest-trees, year, earthly and heavenly cattles, those staying in villages, those with wings and without—all these are protected by the *brahman* which is stored in the Brahmacārin (11. 5. 20-22). The Brahmacārin bears the shining Brahman, wherein all gods are woven. Life, body, mind and heart are all produced from him. Shaping these things he stands performing penance on the surface of the water of the ocean. He, bathing there, shines on the earth (11. 5. 23-26).

It will thus be seen that the Atharvaṇic poet glorifies the Brahmacārin and turns him into the Highest Brahman. The rites he has to undergo with his teacher are also idealized. His stay for three nights with his teacher, lighting the sacred fire with *samidhs*, putting on girdle and begging are all symbolized. He is the generator of all worlds, gods, divine beings and life on the earth. He preceeds the Brahman, which is produced from him. In all such description one

can see the particular trend of the mind of the Atharvaṇic poet. He stresses the glory and supremacy of the practice of the *brahman* (spell) and one who carries on such brahman, a Brahmacārin, is possessed of enormous power, by means of which he can be superior to all things earthly or divine. One can easily see herein what importance the Atharvaṇic poet and preacher attaches to the practice of the Atharvaṇic spells. It can be said that the glorification and deification of the Brahmacārin is a part of a general programme for the rejuvenation and revival of the Vedic religion. It may be also noted that the poet refers to the penance and exertion of the Brahmacārin and the consequent celebacy, which together enable him to secure miraculous power, which is implied in the word *brahman*.

HILLEBRANDT[1] considers that there is a metaphorical reference to the sun and the moon in the relation between the teacher and the student. According to him the verse (11. 5. 3) is significant. The Ācārya, who is the sun devours the moon and keeps him with him for three nights. But this seems to be far-fetched. As I have pointed out above, all details in the *upanayana* rite are idealized and the story of the student with the teacher for three nights is a part of the rite. Thus there does not seem to be any reference to the sun and the moon in the teacher and the taught. It is a simple glorification and deification of the highest order with a purpose which I have referred to above.

## VIII

### THE MINOR DEITIES

In this chapter 62 minor deities in the AV are dealt with. The AV contains a number of deities invoked for various occasions and purposes as can be seen from their description given below. In the every day life of an average person there are number of occasions, when being helpless, he invokes the help of the deities to secure mental consolation and confidence. The Atharvaṇic poets thus praise a number of deities to serve this purpose. At the beginning, I have attempted to give the Atharvaṇic conception of the gods (1). Nextly I have described the deities such as Aditi, Ādityas and Diti (2-7). The deities presiding over the night, the moon, the full-moon and new-moon days and lunar mansions are further described (8.-15). Then there are a number of Creators in the AV such as Kāma, Prāṇa, Skambha. They are discussed in the sections 16-23. The Lords in the AV such as Prajāpati, Dhanapati, etc., are nextly described (24-32). The architects of the gods occupy sections 33 and 34. The deities presiding over the child-birth are treated in sections 35-37. The deities of destructions, Arāti and Nirrti are described in

[1] *Vedische Mythologie*, 1. 471.

sections 38-39. Then there are abstract deities such as sleep, sin and semi-divine beings, Gandharvas and Apsarasas (40-44). Some feelings like love, anger etc., are deified (45-50). The AV and Vedic learning in general are deified (51-60). Finally thirty-seven sages are described along with the Yatis (60-62).

### (1) Devas, Viśvedevas and Devajanas

The word Deva along with Viśvedevas and Devajanas occurs in the AV more than 900 times. It is thus the most common word in the AV. In the AV one sees the different stages through which the word passed with different denotations.

Indra is the seniormost god (3. 19. 5). Varuṇa is the lord of the gods[1] (1. 10. 1, 6. 21. 2). The gods admitted the omniscience of Varuṇa (4. 16. 1). The Highest Brahman is the most ancient god, whose poetry (the act of creation) does not die or grow old (10. 8. 3). He is the only god (13. 5. 1). All gods are in him (11. 8. 19). All these gods abide in Kāla (Time). He is first of the gods (19. 53. 2). They are full of light (1. 9. 1).

The gods are thirty-three in number. They are equally distributed in the heaven, mid-air and earth. Thus they are eleven in each world (19. 27. 11-13). They are mentioned among the Gandharvas, Apsarasas, Serpents, Holy folks and Pitṛs (8. 8. 15) or grouped together with the men, Asuras, and Ṛṣis (8. 9. 24). Their grouping with Pitṛs and men is reasonable as men after death became either the gods or the Fathers (9. 2. 19).

The gods are everywhere in the heaven, on earth, in mid-air, in plants, cattles, beasts and in waters (1. 30. 3). Thus they rule everywhere. Prajāpati however is the lord of the divine waters (4.2.6). On the earth there are different gods guarding different directions. To the east there are the gods by name Hetis, to the south by name Aviṣyu, to the west by name Vairājas, to the north by name Pravidhyan, to firm direction by name Nilimpas and to upward direction by name Avasvats (3. 26. 1-6).

The gods were mortals like men in the beginning. They attained divinity through their splendour (3. 22. 3) or through Rohita (13. 1. 7) or on account of their penance (*tapas*) or through the performance of *ajasava* (the sacrifice of a goat, 4. 14. 1). The mortals after death reach the third heaven and being united with body remain with the gods (18. 3. 7). The dead person becomes a *pitṛ* and lives in the world of light. The gods prosper the Pitṛs who in turn enrich the gods (18. 1. 47). The Devas and Pitṛs are the one and the same, so far their stay in the heaven, the world of light is concerned (6. 123. 3). Thus the mortals who without death reached the heaven

[1] Cf. *devanāmasuraḥ*, 1. 10. 1*a*. The word *asura* is definitely used here in the sense of 'Lord'. *See* Sāyaṇa on this verse. Macdonell, however, thinks that in the AV and later, *asura* means demons only. Cf. *Vedic Mythology*, p. 156.

were the Devas and who after death went there became Pitṛs. The paths leading to the gods go between the heaven and the earth (3. 15. 2).

The gods live on water in the heaven (1. 33. 3).

The gods have different relations like mortals. Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, and Atharvan are the brothers of gods (4. 1. 7, 5. 11. 11). Sinīvālī is the sister of the gods (7. 48. 1). Sleep or Dream is the son of the female relatives of gods (*jāmi*, 6. 46. 2). She is the immortal womb of the gods (6. 46. 1).

Their place of residence is *aśvattha*, a celestial tree in the third heaven (6. 95. 1). They have also their cities or forts (*devapura* 5. 8. 6). They weild weapons like Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas (6. 13. 1). They have a system of spies. Their spies never stand still nor close their eyelids (18. 1. 9). The gods counsel together without the knowledge of men (18. 1. 36). They have a secret treasure, which Indra discovered along the path leading to the gods (18. 27. 9).

Thus the gods stay in the cities, weild weapons and rule like the mortals. These gods are influenced in various ways. They obey the orders of Prajāpati (4. 2. 1). The Brahman controls their thoughts and emotions (3. 30. 4). The Sacrifice (*yajña*) is the lord of the gods (7. 5. 2). The sacrificial priest claims that by offering a sacrifice his life among the gods (after death) would be definitely long (7. 103. 1). The gods and men invoke Virāj for long life (8. 10. 9). The gods are thus fed and given long life by the priests by their *brahman*. In the magical rites the gods act as the representatives of the Atharvaṇic priest (8. 5. 5). The priests finally, themselves become gods (6. 114. 1).[1] There were many who did not believe in the gods (cf. the words *adeva, adevīḥ*). But Rudra protects those who believe in the gods (11. 2. 28). The gods enjoy eternal life and a common source. Vena gives different names to the gods (2.1. 5).

Agni is the *hotṛ* or invoker of the gods. He takes the sacrifice of the mortals to them (5. 12. 1). The gods protect the sacrificer (5. 3. 9). By offering the sacrifice to the gods, the sacrificers go to the world of light, i.e. heaven (9. 5. 17). The gods enrich the stalks of Soma and enjoy them (6. 86. 6). The gods wrap the sacrificer with *amṛta* (immortality or nectar, 7. 17. 3). By the offering of *viṣṭhārin* sacrifice, the sacrificer goes to the gods (4. 34. 3). When duly propitiated the gods come to the sacrifice of the mortals (2. 35. 5). While coming to the sacrifice of the mortals, they know their way (7. 97. 7). The sacrifice to the gods is offered by those, who believe in them. But even the godless people, not believing in them, call them at the

[1] Cf. *devāsaḥ . . . vayaṁ* 6. 114. 16. Sāyaṇa however explains the word *devāsaḥ* as 'subdued by senses.'

sacrifice offered by them (5. 8. 3). The gods being confounded performed sacrifice with a dog and limbs of a cow (7. 5. 5).[1]

The gods perform various duties. They guard different quarters. Dhanapati is the fourth guardian of the quarters in addition to Indra, Soma, Varuṇa, etc. (1. 31. 3).[2] The Viśvedevas guard the thoughts of the king (3. 19. 5). The gods create the world. They discharge the seed of the world (2. 34. 2). They fashion the embryo and facilitate the birth of the creatures in this world (1. 10. 2). The Viśvedevas created the lightning (1. 13. 4). The gods impelled Sūrya with breath (3. 31. 1). They free Sūrya from Grāhi, the demoness of darkness (2. 10. 8). They urge Smara to create pangs of love in the mind of a woman for a man (6. 103. 1-2). The gods sprinkled Smara with mental agitation (6. 132. 1). The Viśvedevas unite a lover with his beloved (3. 8. 4). They overcame their enemies with the help of Indra (3. 10. 12). The gods used handless shafts against the handless demons (6. 65. 2), who were attacked by them on the earth (12. 1. 5). The gods also indulged in agriculture. They sowed barley on the bank of Sarasvatī (6. 30. 1). The gods fashioned the whip of honey (9. 1. 5).

The gods take part in the magical practices too. The girdle, which is tied on the waist in a preparatory rite for performing magic is tied by the gods (6. 133. 1). The *kṛtyā* or witchcraft is also worked by the gods (5. 14. 7). They created poison in the form of a cow of a Brāhmaṇa (5. 19. 10). They remove the inauspicious marks on the body of a woman (1. 8. 2-3). They send pigeon as the messenger of death to the mortals (6. 27. 1). On account of any sin committed by a mortal being against them, they inflict insanity on him (6. 111. 3). The desires in the mind of men for anything are caused by them (5. 7. 3). They lay down a moral course of behaviour for the mortals, who when go against it wrong the divine folks (1. 51. 3). Rudra destroys the haters of the gods (11. 2. 23) and a believer in them appeals to them for help to remove their haters (4. 35. 7).

The gods are invoked to cure various diseases. By the words of Viśvedevas, *yakṣma* is removed from the body (6. 85. 2). *Yakṣma* is sent by them; hence they cure it (8. 7. 2). The gods prepared medicine for curing the rheumatic pains (19. 35. 9). The clay in the ant-hill which is useful for curing the flow of blood or poison is the sister of the gods (6. 100. 1-3). The gods considered that *pippali* to be a medicine, sufficient to save one's life, as it is medicinally important (6. 109. 1-3).

[1] Sāyaṇa in his commentary on this *ṛc* explains that the *devas* are the human sacrificers, who offered such lower creature as dog in the sacrifice. He further points out that this statement is intended to condemn the sacrificial ritual and glorify the sacrifice of knowledge, which is referred to at 7. 5. 5cd.

[2] Cf. Sāyaṇa's commentary on this *ṛc*.

The gods are interested in magical amulets. The *jaṅgiḍa* amulet is given by the gods (2. 4. 4). The amulet of *parṇa* is dear to the gods (3. 5. 3). The gods defeated Asuras by means of the plant *apāmārga* (4. 19. 4). They tied the amulet of *apāmārga* on themselves for securing the heavenly power (19. 20. 3). Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras tied the amulet of *khadira*, looking like ploughshare on the gods for the destruction of Asuras (10. 6. 22). The amulet of *pratisara* was their armour by means of which they resisted the *kṛtyā* (witchcraft, 8. 5. 5). This amulet belongs to the gods (8. 5. 20). The gods and Asuras discharge their missiles, from which the amulet of conch protects a man (4. 10. 5). *Varaṇa* tree from which an amulet is made is a tree of the gods (6. 85. 1). The *kuṣṭha* plant, which is the sovereign remedy against all diseases is born of the gods (5. 4. 7).

One can easily see the evolution of the idea of god in the AV. Firstly the gods were mortals. Due to penance, lustre or Agni they attained goodhood. They became immortals. They were bright and lived in the world of light, full of happiness. There was a constant intercourse between them and the mortals. The mortals offered oblations to them. A mortal after death becomes one of the Pitṛs. The Pitṛs stayed in the world of light enjoying all pleasures along with the gods. It also seems that some of the good-natured and pious men were deified and were respected in general as gods. Atharvan, Aṅgiras and Bṛhaspati though mortal priests were gods and the relations of gods. The Ātharvaṇa teachers propogated that by means of offering a sacrifice the mortals become gods and live in their world, enjoying all pleasures. These sacrifices were also simplified in their rituals. Then gods and Pitṛs were generally benevolent to the mortals and came to their involations. The Ātharvṇa poets compelled the gods to do their numerous jobs; they made them cure diseases, repel the hostile magic and sometimes made them indulge in working *kṛtyā* for themselves. Thus the priest himself became a god, whose maintenance and greatness depended on him. His *brahman* (spell) did influence the gods. Consequently the *brahman* became all-in-all and powerful entity from which everything came out. This is the genesis of the idea of god in the AV.

### (2) Vena

Vena is Āditya according to Sāyaṇa (2. 1. 1). He seems to be a mystic deity of the Atharvaṇic poets, in which everything merges and from which everything emerges. Vena saw the highest place, where everything becomes of one form. The speckled cow (cloud) milked him, when he was born (2. 1. 1). He is the father, generator and relation of all, knowing their abodes. He is the sole name for all gods (2. 1. 3).

### (3) Ādityas

The word occurs about 80 times in the AV. Ādityas are the sons of Aditi and Diti. They are great and invoilable gods. Their domain is the deep sea (7. 7. 1). They stay in the heaven, in the third firmament. They enjoy honey. A deceased person is asked to go along the path, reaching the residence of Ādityas (2. 12. 4). They are very severe (6. 74. 3). They are associated with Varuṇa (19. 18. 4), with Rudras and Vasus (6. 74. 3) and with Āṅgirasas (2. 12. 4). They look on men and have bright fame (10. 3. 18).

They are invoked for bestowing long life on the worshipper (12. 2. 6). An offering of ghee and honey is made to them and to Āṅgirasas, with a view to securing the heaven for the sacrificer (12. 3. 43-44). They bestow excellent lustre on the worshipper (1. 9. 1), and also excellence on others (3. 8. 3). They offer protection from the enemy (5. 21. 10). In the battle, they go about carrying on high the pole of the net to catch the enemy (9. 2. 15). The sovereign remedy of *kuṣṭha* plant is born of Ādityas and Āṅgirasas (19. 39. 5).

The word Āditya also occurs in singular, when it means the sun. Āditya goes at his will from the east to the west, making day and night (13. 2. 3). He sits in a boat having hundred oars. He enables the people to pass days and nights (17. 1. 25). He rises up with ardour, making all haters and rivals of the worshipper subject to him (17. 1. 24). He looks on all things from the mountain (6. 52. 1). He is the calf and the heaven is the cow (4. 39. 5). He kills worms in the cows by means of his rays (2. 32. 1).

### (4) Aditi

The word occurs 55 times in the AV.

Aditi is the mother of those who are of good vows. She is the spouse of *ṛta*. She is ageless and of mighty authority (7. 6. 2). She is the well-oared ship of the gods (7. 6. 3). Her lap is the broad atmosphere (7. 6. 4). She has a number of sons and brothers (6. 4. 1). Varuṇa and Bhaga are her sons (5. 1. 9, 3. 16. 2). Aditi is Bhūmi, the birth-place of all (6. 120. 2). Aditi is the vessel containing all people. She is far spreading and granting all desires (12. 1. 61). She has eight wombs and eight sons (8. 9. 21, 11. 1. 11).

She is invoked for securing all round protection, removal of sin, and for bringing welfare and bliss (19. 10. 9). The gods confer prosperity and eternal life on men in agreement with Aditi (7. 18. 3). The worshippers long to live on the lap of Aditi for hundred winters (2. 28. 4-5).

Aditi, with a view to getting sons, cooked *brahmaudana*[1] (11. 1. 1). Aditi shaves the beard of the youth in the *godāna*

[1] Cf. TS 6. 5. 6. 1, TB 1. 1. 9. 1, MS 1. 6. 12, AV 6. 81. 3.

ceremony (6. 68. 2). Aditi tied an amulet on his hand to secure sons (6. 81. 3).[1] From her body great splendour in the form of elephant came out. Aditi thus grants splendour and eminence to those who pray her for it (3. 22. 1).[2]

### (5) ARYAMAN

The word occurs about 25 times in the AV. He is the god, who brings about the birth of the creatures in the world (11. 5. 4). He is the *hotṛ* of the gods. He is the wise creator (1. 11. 1). He is very closely connected with securing a bridegroom for a girl and bring fortune to the married couple. He comes with locks of his hair loosened in the front, to seek husband for the spinsters and wife for the wifeless. A grown-up unmarried girl is tired of going to the domestic ceremonies in the house of others. Now owing to the favour of Aryaman she gets married and in her house other women gather to celebrate domestic functions (6. 60. 1-2). He is a sympathetic brother of the brides, who secure their husbands through him (14. 1. 17, 2. 36. 2). In the marriage rite the bride goes round the fire of Aryaman (14. 1. 39).

Of the *lakṣā* plant Aryaman is the grandfather (5. 5. 5). Thus Aryaman is a household god favouring women in general, by seeking husbands for them and helping them at the time of child-birth.

### (6) DHĀTṚ

The word occurs about thirty-five times in the AV. He is the god, who supports the earth, the heaven and the sun (6. 60. 3). He is the lord of the world. He is invoked to bestow wealth and all cherished things on the sacrificer in his own house (7. 17. 1-3). In the rite for conception (*garbhādhāna*) Dhātṛ deposits the germ in the womb (5. 25. 4-5). The wise Dhātṛ finds out a bridegroom for a marriageable girl (14. 1. 59) according to her desire (6. 60. 3).

The broken or fractured bone is set right, joint by joint, by Dhātṛ with the help of the plant *rohiṇī* (4. 12. 2). With the help of the *audumbara* amulet Dhātṛ grants nourishment to the people (19. 31. 3). He tied on himself the amulet of *khadira* (10. 6. 21).

### (7) BHAGA

The word occurs nearly 70 times in the AV. He is the god of fortune (1. 14. 1). Fortune particularly in marriage is secured by means of Bhaga, who has a magical amulet of *śaṁśapā*[3] (6. 129. 1).

[1] Cf. Kauśika 35. 11.

[2] See MUIR, *OST* IV, p. 15. Elephant was produced from the shavings of the flesh of Martaṇḍa, the Misshapen son of Aditi.

[3] Sāyaṇa (6. 129. 1) seems to read *śāṁśaphena* for *śāṁśapena*. He explains *śāṁśaphena* as 'with a weapon looking like the hoop of cow or buffalo. Kauśika (36. 12) understands it to be an amulet of *sauvarcala* herb. Sāyaṇa (loc. cit) explains this to be amulet of *śaṅkhapuṣpikā* tree. It, however, seems that an amulet of *śiṁśapā* tree (*dalbergia sisu*), seems to have been employed for securing fortune in marriage.

The trees rejoice in the lustre they receive from Bhaga. He is without eye-sight and is struck by the trees on the way (6. 129. 3).[1] Bhaga finds out the suitable husband for a girl. Gold, *guggulu* (incense), fragrant powder and Bhaga hand her over to the suitors so that she may find one of her own choice (2. 36. 7). Bhaga takes Sūryā by holding her hand in her marriage of (14. 1. 20). He bestows prosperity on the newly married couple (14. 1. 31). He takes a leading part in the marriage rites (14. 1. 59).

In the construction of a new house Bhaga is invoked to sprinkle the floor of the house with ghee (3. 12. 4). He is invoked to bestow bliss and gifts on the singers (1. 26. 2, 3. 12. 5). He brings about mutual good-will and harmony (6. 74. 1). Bhaga is invoked along with Indra to restore an insane person to his proper senses (6. 111. 4).

Bhaga, thus, is a god particularly invoked to confer fortune in the marriage. Bhaga is a blind god. *Prāśitra* lost his eyes. *Prāśitra* is the sacrificial food eaten by the Brāhmaṇas. As his blindness is referred to in a magical rite to secure fortune it may mean metaphorically that that fortune in marriage is indiscriminate. This may explain how Bhaga, like love is blind.

### (8) The Nakṣatras

Two hymns (19. 7, 8) praise the Nakṣatras. There are twenty-eight lunar mansions mentioned in the AV (19. 8. 2). Candramas is the lord of the Nakṣatras (5. 24. 10). On their lap Soma is placed (14. 1. 2). The rising sun draws in himself their lustre in the morning (7. 14. 1). Along with them the heriditary disease (*kṣetriya*) also disappears (3. 7. 7). One of the Apsarasas belong to the Nakṣatras, hence she is called Nakṣatrīyā (2. 2. 4).

Some of the Nakṣatras are inauspicious. A child born on the Jyeṣṭhaghni Nakṣatra, on the two unfasteners of Yama and on the uprooter (Mūla), is inauspicious. It kills its elder brother or sister or elderly persons (6. 110. 2). The Jyeṣṭhaghni and Mūlabarhaṇa are termed as Jyeṣṭhā and Mūla lunar mansions. TB also designates these in the same way.[2] The Mūla Nakṣatra is referred to in dual as *vicṛtautārake* (2. 8. 1). It may be so referred to because of its divided appearance. A child born on these Nakṣatras is caught by an evil spirit, Grāhī (6. 112. 1)

The favour of these twenty-eight[3] Nakṣatras is saught by the poet praising them (19. 7. 1). The twenty-eight Nakṣatras are the

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa on this ṛc and Nirukta 11. 14.

[2] Cf. 1. 5. 2. 9.

[3] The word used is *turmiśa*. It is explained by Sāyaṇa as putting down the oppressors from turmi + śa or tur + miśā. It is not convincing. Less convincing is the interpretation as twenty-eight by Whitney and others. See Whitney, *JAOS*, VI, 414, 468.

following: (1) Kṛttikā, (2) Rohiṇī, (3) Mṛgaśiras, (4) Ārdrā, (5, 6) Punarvasu, (7) Puṣya, (8) Āśleṣā, (9) Maghā, (10-11) two Phalgunis, (12) Hasta, (13) Citrā, (14) Svātī, (15) Viśākhā, (16) Anurādhā, (17) Jyeṣṭhā, (18) Mūla, (19-20) two Āṣāḍhās, (21) Abhijit, (22) Śravana, (23) Sraviṣṭhā, (24) Śatabhiṣaj, (25) Prauṣṭhapadā, (26) Revatī, (27) Asvayuj, (28) Bharaṇī.

These Nakṣatras begin with Kṛttikā (19. 7. 2-5). The Nakṣatras are in the sky, in the atmosphere, in the waters, on the earth, on the mountains and in the quarters. The moon goes on arranging them (19. 8. 1-2).

(9) *Śakadhūma* (6. 128). The word means the smoke of dung. The Nakṣatras made Śakadhūma their king. They bestowed on him auspicious day, saying that it should be his kingdom (6. 128. 1). He is invoked to make day, night, morning, noon and evening auspicious (6. 128. 2-3). Sāyaṇa commenting on this hymn points out that Śakadhūma is the fire arising out of dung and here it means Brāhmaṇa, who was made the king of the Nakṣatras. BLOOMFIELD[1] considers Śakadhūma to be a weather prophet. WHITNEY[2] does not agree with him. According to him, Śakadhūma is the Milky Way looking like a thin line of smoke drawn across the sky. This is the real king of the Nakṣatras. Its representation is found in the line of smoke of dung which is invoked to counteract the evil influence of the Nakṣatras and possibly to give an indication of the weather sign.

## (10) RĀTRI (19. 47-50).

Four hymns praise Night (Rātri). Rātri is a young household maiden, belonging to Savitṛ and Bhaga. She is easily invoked and praised. She is full of darkness, so that even the horses cannot see through her on account of her lustre.[3] Rich in fortune she fills the heaven and the earth with greatness (19. 9. 1). She spreads herself on the seats of the sky and bright darkness comes on (19. 47. 1). Surmounting all things, the mighty one ascends to the lofty sky, spearing towards all like a friend (19. 49. 2). She has taken to herself the lustre of the lion, the stag, the tiger, the leopard, bottom of the horse and man's roar. She puts on many forms (19. 49. 4). She is the mother of cold (19. 49. 5). The sage Bharadvāja called the night as *ghṛtāci*, dripping with ghee (19. 48. 6).

She, the daughter of the sky has 99 or 88 or 77 or 66 or 55, or 33 or 22 or 11 protectors watching men. They may be the stars twinkling in the sky at night (19. 47. 3-5).

[1] *JAOS*, xiii, p. cxxxiii.

[2] AV, see pp. 377-78.

[3] Sāyaṇa on 19. 49. 1 interpretes the word '*aśvakṣabhā*' in this way. WHITNEY (p. 979) considers this explanation absurd and emends the text as '*viśvavyacas*' and explains it as 'all-expanded'. But there is no need for such out of the way emendation. PPP. reads 'aśvakṣarā' 'which makes horses tremble down.'

She is invoked to protect men with these watchmen, all that stirs and is sleeping at night (19. 47. 2). She is also asked to protect from the mischief-makers, evil-plotters, thieves, robbers of cows and horses and sorceress. She is called upon to make the snakes blind and headless and the wolves deprived of their jaws (19. 47. 6-8).

She is invoked to give protection to all life and property (19. 48. 4-5). She has very swift bulls having sharp horns, by means of which she takes all creatures across all difficulties (19. 50. 2).

### (11) Candra and Candramas

The word Candra occurs 23 times and Candramas occurs 26 times with AV.

Candramas is the lord of the Nakṣatras (5. 24. 10). The moon rises up with the Nakṣatras (19. 19. 4). Soma is also called Candramas (11. 6. 7). He goes arranging the lunar mansions (19. 8. 1).

In a medicinal rite the moon figures as the father of the reed. The reed is used for releasing the flow of urine (1. 3. 4). The *apacits* (scrofulous swelling) are burnt by the moon (6. 83. 1).

In a charm of destroying the rivals, the moon is invoked to burn him, who hates the singer. With his lustre, flame and blaze, he removes the hater (2. 22. 5). It is surprising that in this spell the moon is attributed to have flames, etc. The moon is also called the killer of Vṛtra. He is invoked to protect one from the months (19. 27. 2).

Sūrya and Candra are invoked jointly to protect and grant long life (8. 1. 12). They are the eyes of the Brahman (10. 7. 33). The life of the sun and the moon is endangered by the work of the magicians (19. 27. 5).

Candramas finds rest in Skaṁbha (10. 7. 12).

The amulet of *khadira*, which Bṛhaspati tied on himself for strength was tied by Candramas for conquering the golden city of Asuras (10. 6. 10).

The moon is praised to carry the worshipper to the place where the knowers of the Brahman go with vow and penance and to bestow mind on the person there (19. 43. 4).

For the full moon see 'Paurṇamasi' and his connection with Soma see under 'Soma'.

### (12) Soma

The word occurs 280 times in the AV.

Soma is the best of the plants (6. 15. 3). He with the plants is invoked to remove sin and confer bliss (2. 10. 2). He is the lord of the plants (5. 24. 7). Soma is twany in colour and is praised to grant faith to a person to secure his desire (5. 7. 6). His weapon is Vajra or thunderbolt. With this bolt he is praised to smite the face and crush him, who, an ill-famed one, tries to offend a pious worshipper.

Thus he is to protect a man from the wickedness of wicked ones. Even if a person, who troubles the worshipper be stranger or relation, he should be deprived of his strength. In the RV version, Indra takes the place of Soma in this *ṛc.* (6. 6. 3 = RV 10. 133. 5).

The help of Soma is invoked by the sacrificial priests to secure splendour; so that he may be favourable to the sacrificer (6. 5. 3). Soma removes sin (6. 3. 2). Soma, the friend of Indra being purified by the strainers of Vāyu removes all opposition (6. 51. 1). Soma is possessed of rays (8. 1. 2). Thus we get the identification of Soma with the moon. Soma is directly called to be Candramas (11. 6. 7). The stem of Soma is the lord of fighters. By name it is never deficient in anything. Therefore he (*darśa*, the slender crescent of the new moon) should never make the worshipper deficient in progeny and riches (7. 81. 4). The *darśa* or the young Soma plant (moon) is complete at the point and at the end. He is charming to look at (7. 81. 4). The stems of Soma are unexhausted and the gods feed on the unexhausted (7. 81. 6). Soma is dear to Aśvins in the morning libation, to Indra and Agni in the mid-day libation and to Ṛbhus in the third libation (9. 1. 11-13). The priests are busy with offering of Soma to Indra on Bhūmi (12. 1. 38).

Rohita possesses Soma and plants. He has the back of Soma (13. 1. 2, 12).

Soma is the brain of the sacrificial cow (9. 7. 2). Skambha protects the wise Soma (10. 2. 19). The highest Brahman produces the pure Soma (10. 7. 36).

The stalks of Soma are put in the rice grains, which are to be cooked for the *brahmaudana* rite, which Aditi offered (11. 1. 25). In the praise of the sacred cow, it is told that Dhanapati, the lord of wealth milked the cow. It was the Soma. It was kept in three vessels. In this operation the sage Atharvan, duly consecrated sat on the golden *barhis* (10. 10. 12).

The mighty Indra and Agni drink Soma (1. 21. 8. 3).

Soma is employed in various charms.

God Soma is prayed that a portent, imprecation or hateful wrong should not find out the charmer. He is praised to have '*adārasrut*'. WHITNEY takes it to be a name of a Sāman found at PB XV 3. 7. GRIFFITH explains it, 'May the deadly dart glid harmlessly glide in this sacrifice'. Sāyaṇa comments, 'Let the enemy not take resort to his wife, i.e. let the enemy be killed' (1. 20. 1).

God Soma blesses the woman, who is in search of her husband; so that she obtains proper husband (2. 36. 3).

A king, who has lost the support of his people is banished out of his territory. He resorts to mountains. When again the times are favourable he is installed. Soma calls him back from the mountains, where he might be resting (3. 3. 3). Soma is participated in the sacrifice. The Soma-drinkers are always respected, but if the

sacrifice is not well performed and if there are errors in its performance, the Soma-drinkers become unworthy of sacrificial gifts (2. 35. 3).

The power of Soma is at the basis of many uses of Soma in the magical rites.

The amulet of *parṇa* is tied for securing long life, prosperity and for destroying rivals. The *parṇa* amulet has the formidable power of Soma in it (3. 5. 4).

Soma is the lord of the north (3. 27. 4). There is a charm for securing safety from tigers, robbers, etc. The charm to crush the tigers belongs to Atharvan and is born of Soma. The strength of Soma is at the basis of such power of the charm (4. 3. 7).

In a charm against the poison of the poisoned arrows, it is told that Brāhmaṇa was born first with ten heads and ten mouths. He first drank Soma and made the poison effectless. Thus Soma makes the poison powerless (4. 6. 1). Plant used in promoting virility is described to be the brother of Soma (4. 4. 5). The pearl-shell amulet used against evil is born of Soma (4. 10. 6). Soma banishes fever (5. 22. 1). Soma is invoked to crush down the head of the demon, who eats flesh (5. 29. 10). The *kuṣṭha* plant used against fever is the friend of Soma (5. 4. 7). Soma dispels the poison of the serpents (10. 4. 26).

Soma is the relation of the Brāhmaṇa, therefore, a Brāhmaṇa is not to be killed (5. 18. 6).

Rudra and Soma are described as having pointed weapons and missiles and yet easy to serve. They are praised to be propitious (5. 6. 5).

Soma is described to be always victorious in the battles (6. 97. 1). The plants with their king Soma are praised to relieve one of his sin (6. 96. 1). Soma is invoked to purify a person from the offence, that he might have committed with his eye, mind, speech, during wakeful or sleeping state (6. 97. 3).

The rite of shaving or (*godāna*) is performed under the instructions from Soma (6. 68. 1).

The amulet of *fāla* is tied on oneself for great fame and lustre. Bṛhaspati also tied that amulet for strength (10. 6. 8).

It will thus be noticed that Soma plant is used by the Atharvaṇic singer not only for sacrifice but also for magical and medicinal purposes. Great emphasis is laid on the power of Soma and somehow it is made to connect itself with the various amulets and charms. The identification of the plant with the moon is complete in the AV and this naturally leads to the conception that the moon is the lord of plants and herbs (11. 6. 7).

### (13) Paurṇimāsī

One hymn (7. 80) glorifies the full-moon or the goddess presiding over the night of full-moon. The night or goddess is full from

behind, front and middle. She is victorious. The poet hopes to stay on the back of her firmament with food, staying together with gods (7. 80. 1). The full-moon is a vigorous bull. The bull is offered in sacrifice for securing continuous, unfailing gifts (7. 80. 2). The full-moon is the first among the days and nights. She is worshipful one. The holy or pious people, offering sacrifice to her enter in her firmament (7. 80. 4). She is also connected with Vrātya (15. 2. 14, 16. 1, 17. 9).

### (14) Amāvāsyā and Sinīvālī

The word occurs nine times. She is the goddess of the new moon. Amāvāsyā is chosen by all and is fortunate. The gods dwelling together bestowed fortune on her. She is praised to assign the singer wealth, rich in heroes (7. 79. 1). Amāvāsyā declares that all pious people dwell in her. That is why she is called Amāvāsyā. All gods and Sādhyas, headed by Indra come together in her (7. 79. 2). She is the night, which collects all wealth and causes food, prosperity and good to enter in beings. She is offered with oblations and she yields food and milk (7. 79. 3). All forms in this world are born of the encompassing Amāvāsyā (7. 79. 4).

The Amāvāsyā with the moon slightly visible in her is called Sinīvālī. Sinīvālī is the mistress of the people. She has thousand braids of hair. This goddess is the wife of Viṣṇu. She is invoked to stir up her husband for bestowing gifts on the sacrificer (7. 46. 3). Sinīvālī is prayed to take the cattle to the pasture (2. 26. 2), to lay a germ in the womb in the rite of conception and also a male germ in a rite for the birth of a son (5. 25. 3, 6. 11. 3).

### (15) Diti

A minor deity occuring five times in the AV.

The sons of Diti are mentioned along with those of Aditi at 7. 7. 1. Their domain is in deep sea. None is beyond them. Here there is no distinction between the sons of Diti and Aditi, the Daityas and Ādityas respectively, as they are styled. However, Sāyaṇa differs in his interpretation from Whitney. He points out that as the *rc* is employed in the praise of Devas. It means that the place of the sons of Diti is scattered away, so that they would not stay in the ocean (which is the place of the residence of the demons, the Daityas). The Daityas are then expelled from their place, viz., ocean, where the gods would stay. But this interpretation is farfetched. The seer Atharvan of the hymn (7. 7) does not seem to make any distinction between the sons of Diti and Aditi.

In the rite of offering the cooked rice, Diti is mentioned to be the winnowing basket (11. 3. 4). Vrātya was followed by Diti and other deities when he went to the uncovered direction (15. 6. 20-21). Diti is mentioned to be the half skull of Vrātya, the other being, Aditi (15. 18. 4).

### (16) KĀMA

In the AV, Kāma appears in twofold character, viz., the creative desire and sexual love. AV 9. 2 fully illustrates the former character of Kāma. Kāma is the mighty bull that kills the rivals (9. 2. 1). The daughter of Kāma is the cow, which the sages call Vāk Virāj (shining speech, 9. 2. 6). Kāma is a strong and fierce superintendent (9. 2. 7). Kāma was born first. Neither gods, nor Fathers, nor men came to the level of Kāma. He is superior to these and is every great (9. 2. 19). He is greater than and superior to heaven and earth, waters, fire, all directions, regions, bees, bats, *kururu* worms, flies, tree-creepers, winking and standing creatures, ocean, wind, sun, and moon (9. 2. 20-24). He has excellent and propitious bodies, and putting them on, he becomes real (9. 2. 25). Kāma is covered over with the riple guarding defence. The *brahman* (charm) is turned into an invulnerable armour for Kāma (9. 2. 16). Kāma is the chief of all gods (9. 2. 8).

Kāma is invoked to hurl down the enemies and rivals with great might (9. 2. 1). Evil dreams, misfortunes, childlessness, ill health and distress of the singer, are to be loosened upon his enemy by Kāma (9. 2. 3). Kāma is invoked along with Indra and Agni to destroy all adversaries of the singer (9. 2. 9, 17).

Thus Kāma is the Desire behind the creation. His being first in the creation and being superior to all gods, human beings and all great elements in the world indicates that he is the Desire, in the mind of the Creator. He has excellent bodies which enter everywhere. This description of Kāma indicates his omnipresent nature. This aspect of Kāma is further described at 19. 52. Kāma, seed of mind was born first (19. 52. 1). All desires come to the beings on account of Kāma (19. 52. 4). Kāma does not here play the role of the Creator but rather the force behind the creation.

The second aspect of Kāma is the sexual love. Here Kāma figures as a deity with an arrow fixed to a bow in his hand, ready for discharging it. The arrow of Kāma has mental agonies as feathers, love as its tip and impulse as its neck (3. 25. 2). The well-straightened arrow of Kama, when discharged against the loved person dries his or her spleen, consuming him or her. It pierces his or her heart. The woman, against whom the arrow is discharged, becomes submissive, gentle and absolutely attached to him speaking pleasing words (3. 25. 3-4). Like a creeper clinging to a tree the woman of one's love clings to him, who always influences her mind (6. 8. 1-3). Her eyes and hair, longingly dry for the man, whose body, feet, eyes and thighs she longs for (6. 9. 1).

This aspect of Kāma is the direct predecessor of Madana, the husband of Rati, mentioned in the post-Vedic literature.

## (17) Kāla

The Time is personified and deified in Kāla. Kāla has thousand eyes. He is ageless and abounding in seed. Kāla is a horse running with seven reins.[1] The wise seers mount the horse. All beings form his wheels (19. 53. 1). He is the first god. His chariot has seven wheels, seven names and has immortality as its axle. He carries all beings in this world (19. 53. 2).[2] He exists in various forms. He encompasses all beings. He is the most lustrous god, called Kāla in the highest heaven (19. 53. 3-4).

Kāla begot the heaven, the earth, past, future, waters, *brahman* and all creatures (19. 53. 5; 54. 1). He is the lord of all. He is the father of Prajāpati (19. 53. 8). Becoming Brahman, he supports Parameṣṭhin (19. 53. 6, 9). *Tapas* (penance) and the self-existing seer Kaśyapa were born of Kāla (19. 53. 10). Mind, Prāṇa, name, penance, the Brahman, all creatures, Gandharvas and Apsarasas are fixed in Kāla (19. 53. 7, 8; 54. 4).

In Kāla stand the divine Aṅgiras and Atharvan (19. 54. 5). The wind blows on account of Kāla. From Kāla, the *ṛcs* and *sāmans* were born (19. 54. 2-3). Kāla, having conquered all worlds as the highest god goes on (19. 54. 5).

Such is the conception of the Atharvaṇic poet about Kāla, who is the creator and destroyer of all things in this world. He is the Brahman and everything is set in him.

## (18) Prāṇa, (19) Apāna and (20) Āyus (*long life*)

Prāṇa is personified as the supreme divinity (11. 4). He is the lord of all that breathes and does not breathe, supporting all. Everything is subject to him (11. 4. 1). Prāṇa clothes all creatures as a father clothes his dear son (11. 4. 1). The gods worship Prāṇa, who is Mṛtyu (Death) and fever. He is Virāj, Deṣṭrin (the guide of all), Sun, Moon, Prajāpati, Mātariśvan, Vāta, past and future (11. 4. 11; 12, 15). Man breaths out and breaths in, even when he is within the womb (11. 4. 14). Inhaling and exhaling are rice and barley. Prāṇa is a bull (11. 4. 13, 14).

Thus Prāṇa is conceived as the life-breath of all creatures, worlds and luminaries. He is the life of the existence.

All creatures offer tribute to Prāṇa; for, on his account they exist (11. 4. 19).

Prāṇa moves as an embryo of the deities. He comes into being when he enters into the past, present and future (11. 4. 20). Prāṇa continuously moves over the world. If he were to take out even a step from it, there would be no today, no tomorrow, no night, no day, and never the dawn (11. 4. 20). Even in sleep, he watches erect.

[1] The *raśmis* are the rains and the rays. With the second meaning of the word *raśmi*, Kāla becomes identified with the Sun.

[2] See Sāyaṇa on this *ṛc*.

He does not lie down. None has ever heard of him sleeping among those who sleep (11. 4. 25).

Prāṇa showers life on the plants in the form of rain. Then the plants and herbs, the Ātharvaṇa and Āṅgirasa, divine and human, are produced (11. 4. 16, 17). Prāṇa thunders, roars and flashes like lightning (11. 4. 2-3). All plants become delighted when Prāṇa loudly calls them (11. 4. 4-6). Prāṇa has also got the healing power (11. 4. 9).

Thus Prāṇa is the life of the existence on the world. He is like the rain to the plants that thrive. He cures diseases. He rules over everything (11. 4. 24).

Prāṇa with Apāna are secondarily conceived as the inhaling and exhaling breaths. Diseases creep in the body and Prāṇa and Apāna are in danger. Thus both these are connected with Mṛtyu, who ends life (8. 1. 1). Magic and medicine of the Atharvaṇic priests inspire hope in the mind of the sick person that his breathes, life and mind will not leave him; but will live to see the world, the sun and the fire (8. 1. 4). A man thus brought back from the darkness of death is granted a life-time of hundred years (8. 2. 2). His breath is brought from Vāta and sight from the sun. His mind and tongue work properly (8. 2. 3). Homage is paid to Mṛtyu and Prāṇa in saving the man from the fetters of death (8. 2. 4). Agni also favours the man by granting breath (*prāṇa*) to him (8. 2. 13). A barber shaving beard and cutting hair also robs some of his life. Rice and barley do not any more cause *balāsa*, or *yakṣma* (8. 2. 18). Prāṇa and Apāna are thus made to enter in the body of a dangerously ill man, as two bulls in a stall (7. 53. 5). Vāyu is the over-lord of Prāṇa (6. 10. 2).

Prāṇa and Apāna are invoked to protect one from death (2. 16. 1) and fear (2. 15). Āyus, immortality or long life is saught for in many charms of the AV (19. 64. 4, 61. 1, 63. 1). The Ātharvaṇa poet hopes to see, live, wake, ascend and prosper for hundred autumns (19. 67. 1-8).

### (21) SKAMBHA (10. 7-8).

The Atharvaṇic thinkers evolved a new divinity called Skambha. Skabmha is the support of everything in the Universe. He is greater than the Brahman. Hence he is called the Highest Brahman, the *Jyeṣṭha Brahman* (10. 7. 17, 34). He is the soul of the universe. Vaiśvānara is his head. His eyes are the Aṅgirasas. His limbs are the *yātus* (10. 7. 18). The Brahman is his mouth. His tongue is the *madhukaśā*, the 'honey-ship.' Virāj is his udder (10. 7. 19). From Skambha, the Ṛcs were chopped off. The Yajus were scraped from him. The Sāmans are his hair. The Atharvāṅgīrasa is his mouth (10. 7. 20).[1]

[1] Atharvan, the traditional seer of 10. 7 naturally places the Atharvaveda and the Āṅgirasas in the most prominent position in the form of Skambha. The Atharvaṅgirasas, the Atharvaveda is the mouth and the Āṅgirasas are the eyes of Skambha.

Skambha, considered as the Highest Brahman has the sun as the eye, Agni as his mouth and Vāta as his inhaling and exhaling. The Aṅgirasas are his eyes (10. 7. 33-34).

Skambha sustains the heaven and earth, atmosphere and six wide directions. He enters the whole existence (10. 7. 35; 1. 8. 2).

In his different limbs, penance, *ṛta*, vow, truth and faith reside. Agni, Mātariśvan and the moon form his limbs. The earth, heaven and sky also form his different limbs (10. 7. 1-4). In him are set the waters, the *brahman*, the existant and non-existant universe, thirty-three gods, the first born seers, *ṛcs*, *sāmans*, *yajus*, the sole seer of all, immortality, death, Prajāpati, Parameṣṭhin, Ādityas, Rudras, Vasus, the gods named Bṛhats (great), the deity Avi (protection) and Indra (10. 7. 10-30, 8. 31). Skambha is the great Yakṣa in the midst of the creation (10. 7. 38).[1] All gods continuously offer tribute to him (10. 7. 38). Skambha is the sum-total of all life, manifest or non-manifest in the Universe (10. 8. 11). From him the sun rises and in him it sets (10. 8. 16). He is the most ancient god. Yet he becomes ever new. He is unaging. He, the immortal stays in the house of a mortal. He is manifest in all forms and stages of human beings (10. 8. 23, 26. 28). He is free from desire, wise, immortal, self-existent, satisfied with the essence, not deficient in any way and unaging yet the young soul (10. 8. 44).

### (22) PURUṢA 10. 2.

The Brahman fashioned the various limbs of man, Puruṣa, framed the structure of his bones, put brain in his head, enclosed in his body feelings, emotions, capacity for work, gave form and name, put breath, expiration and respiration, deposited sacrifice, truth and falsehood, death and immortality, gave him life-time, put *retas* (seed) in him for the continuity of race and established wisdom, mind and cultural arts such as music and dancing (10. 2. 1-19). Thus the Brahman resides in the gods, divine folk, tribes of men and Kṣatra (10.2.23). The Brahman fashioned man and made him a living being, capable of discharging his social, religious and cultural functions. Then Atharvan sewed together his head and also his heart and sent above the brain Pavamāna, the purifying one.[2] That is indeed the head, completed by Atharvan, which is the vessel of gods (10. 2. 26-27). The Brahman entered the body of man, which is the shining, yellow, golden and unconquered stronghold (10. 2. 33).

[1] Yakṣa is the wonderful spirit.

[2] It may be Soma or Atharvan himself as WHITNEY points out. See *Atharvaveda*, p. 571.

## (23) VIRĀJ (8. 9. 10)

Virāj means the shining one. Virāj is further represented as the First Being. Virāj is also represented as a cow which yields desires and has two calves which rose out of the waters (8. 9. 1-2). Virāj was thus universe in the beginning. When Virāj was born the whole universe was afraid that she would occupy it. She then came down to the *gārhapatya* (the householder's) fire, the *āhavanīya* fire (the fire of offering), the southern fire, the assembly and gathering (8. 10. 1-11).

Virāj ascended and remained striding fourfold in the atmosphere. The gods and men desiring to secure food from her called her. Indra became her calf. Gāvyatri became the halter and cloud was the udder. By means of the *sāmans*[1] the gods milked from her herbs, waters and expansion (8. 10. 8-17).

To the forest trees she went. The trees cut her, who then revived in one year. She went to the Fathers, who killed her only to be revived in a month. The gods killed her, who then came to life in a half month. The men killed her, who came into being immediately (8. 10. 18-21).

The Asuras called her as Māyā (illusion). Virocana, the son of Pralhāda was her calf. In an iron pot, Dvimūrdhan, the son of Ṛtu milked illusion from her. The Fathers called her as Svādhā. Yama became her calf. Antaka, the son of Mṛtyu in a silver pot milked *svādha* from her. On that they subsist.

The men called her Irāvatī (rich in or full of food). Manu the son of Vivasvat was the calf. Prithi, the son of Vena in the vessel of the earth milked agriculture and food-grains. On these two, agriculture and food grains men subsist. The seven seers called her 'Brahmaṇvatī (full of the *brahman*). King Soma was her young one. In a vessel of metre, Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras milked from her the *brahman* and penance on which they subsist. The gods called her as Ūrja. Indra became her calf. In a spoon, Savitṛ milked refreshments from her. The Gandharvas and Apsarasas called her Puṇyagandhā (one of holy fragrance). Citraratha, the son of Sūryavarcas became her calf. In a lotus leaf, Vasuruci, another son of Sūryavarcas milked holy fragrance from her. On that they subsist. The other folk called her Tirodhā (concealment). Kubera, the son of Viśravaṇa became her calf. In a raw vessel, Rajatanābhi, the son of Kubera milked concealment from her. On that the other folk subsist. The serpents called her as Viṣavatī (poisonous). Takṣaka the son of Viśāla became her calf. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the son of Irāvat (Airāvata) milked from her poison in a vessel. On poison the serpent subsist.

Thus Virāj is a divine cow yielding subsistence to all. The

[1] These are *bṛhat*, *rathantara*, *vāmadevya* and *yajñāyajñīya*.

Asuras, the Fathers, the Gods, the man, the seven sages, Gandharvas and Apsarasas, other folk and serpents got from her the food on which they subsist. The Asuras live on delusion, the Fathers on Svadhā, men on agriculture and food grains, the seven seers on the *brahman* and penance, the gods on Ūrja, the Gandharvas and Apsarasas on holy fragrance, the other folks on concealment and serpents on poison.

### (24) Vācaspati

He is the lord of the Vedic learning.[1] He is invoked to retain the Vedic study in the minds of the students of the Vedas, so that it should not go away from them (1. 1. 4). He is also prayed to bestow on the students of the Vedas the power and bodies of the twenty-seven gods (possibly the Maruts, 1. 1. 1). He comes to the devotees with his divine mind (1. 1. 2). Along with the lord of Uṣas, he drives off demons, who cause bad dreams (16. 6. 6-7). He brings about harmony, pleasant and agreeable minds among different contending members of a family and bestows cows and progeny (18. 1. 16-17).

### (25) Brahmaṇaspati

He is the lord of the Vedas,[2] or the Vedic prayer. He is connected with sacrificial ritual; hence he is invoked in the morning (3. 16. 1). He protects the prayers of the Vedic singers addressed to the gods (6. 4. 1). He blesses the householder in whose house the Atharvaṇic priests prepare oblations and offer them to the deities (6. 5. 3). With the help of the *yajña* (the sacrifice) he awakens the gods and grants life-time, breath, cattle, progeny and fame to the sacrificer (19. 63. 1). Indra and Brahmaṇaspati bring grace to Rohita (13. 1. 51).

He is invoked in a magical rite to increase the virile power of man and to make his generative organ stout like a bow (4. 4. 6). He causes to disappear the devils, which have front feet behind and heels in the front, which are born of the thrashing ground (*khala*), of dung and which are called *uruṇḍas*, *matmatas*, *kaṁbha muṣkas*, and *ayāśus*. These devils cause embryonic diseases (8. 6. 16). The *abhīvarta* amulet is favoured by him, who bestows prosperity on the wearer of that amulet for the sake of the attainment of the dominion (1. 29. 1).[3] He favours a sacrificer, pressing Soma for the god's by shattering the plots of the godless persons and makes them subject to the priest, who employs the spells.

In this respect Brahmaṇaspati is also the lord of spells as the word, *brahman* is also used in the sense of spells. This naturally explains his prominence in the magical practices. As sacrifice is also an aspect of the magical practices, he is invoked to favour the

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 1. 1. 1. [2] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 1. 29. 1. [3] Cf. RV 10. 174. 1.

[4] For the magical qualities of *darbha*, see under 'Darbha'.

sacrifice and the sacrificer. Darbha,[4] a magical herb is called Brahmaṇaspati (19. 30. 3). Brahmaṇaspati brings about harmony between the contending parties (6. 74. 1). He makes auspicious the tigerlike two teeth of a young child, desiring bite the parents (6. 140. 1). He[1] controls the serpents and is invoked to bend together the crooked, jointless and limbless serpents, making crooked faces (7. 56. 4). He removes *yakṣma* and bestows life of hundred years on his devotees (12. 2. 6). In the marriage rite, when the party of the friends of the bridegroom and a priest[2] go out to seek a bride, Brahmaṇaspati makes the bridegroom look bright in the eyes of the bride and her men (14. 1. 31). He bestows royalty on the king, who is to be crowned. The newly crowned king is wrapped in a garment by Brahmaṇaspati. He also favours the king by keeping a watch over his dominion for his life. He grants to his worshippers long life, splendour and death due to old age only (19. 24. 1-3). He renders the quarters auspicious for the singer when they are urged by wind to go elsewhere (19. 8. 6).

### (26) Bṛhaspati

The word occurs about 145 times in the AV. According to Sāyaṇa (19. 4. 3) Bṛhaspati is the guardian of the gods, in the capacity of their chief adviser. Bṛhaspati figures in the AV in different capacities. He appears as a god, as a seer, the son of Aṅgiras, as one of the Fathers, and as a symbol of the sacrificial priesthood. Bṛhaspati, as a god (*deva*) serves Indra in a ladle (*camasa*, 7. 110. 3). The gods and deities came into being from him. He is also Kāma (19. 4. 4). He is possessed of Viśvedevas (all gods, 19. 18. 10). He is the divinity (*devatā*) of the Ādityas. He is the universal ruler (*saṃrāt*). Along with the Father Atharvan, to Bṛhaspati, the relative of the gods, homage is paid as the creator of all, the divine *kavi* (poet, 4. 1. 5, 7). He is the lord of the upward direction (3. 27. 6). From that direction he protects along with the Viśvedevas (19. 17. 10). He has the two hands of *satya* (truth). He releases the fetters of old age and the death, just at the time of birth (3. 11. 8). He belongs to the seven sages. Virāj came to them. Soma became the calf of Virāj. Bṛhaspati the son or descendant of Aṅgiras milked the *brahman* (prayer or spell) and penance or fervour (*tapas*) from her. On these two the seven sages subsist (8. 10. 13-15). Vrātya became Bṛhaspati (15. 14. 17). At that time the Brahman entered in Bṛhaspati and Kṣatra in Indra. Thus all Brahman (the Brāhmaṇas) is represented by Bṛhaspati (15. 10). Bṛhaspati is pleasant by nature and forms the soul by name *nṛmaṇāḥ* (manly minded) of the singer (16. 3. 5).

He is offered offerings in sacrifices. He is invoked to come

[1] *PPP* reads *Savitṛ* for *Brahmaspati*.

[2] This priest is also called Brahmaṇaspati. Cf. Kauśika 75. 8-9.

to the singer inspiring him with intentions or designs.[1] He is prayed to acknowledge the prayers of the singer (19. 4. 4). As in the RV, so in the AV, he figures as one of the Fathers, who comes along with Ṛkvas to the funeral sacrifice.[2] In the funeral rites he assumes the position of Adhvaryu (18. 4. 15). The sacrificial Odana (cooked rice) has Bṛhaspati as its head (11. 3. 1). The sacrificial bull is called Bṛhaspati by wise persons (9. 4. 8).

As Bṛhaspati is the lord of the spells (*brahman*), it is no wonder that the Atharvaṇic poets employ him in a number of magical rites. In the battle rites, Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, by means of the *brahman*, sets up in the sky the *triṣandhi* (a three-jointed thunderbolt), a weapon to destroy the Asuras. He also utilises *vajra* for killing the Asuras. He is invoked to offer the help of that *vajra* to kill human enemies. He thus seems to be the pioneer of the magical warfare, which is properly represented in the Mahābhārata war (12. 10. 10, 12, 13). He designs a net for tying together the enemies on the battle-field (6. 103. 1). An amulet looking like ploughshare and made up of *khadira* tree, was tied by Bṛhaspati on Agni to secure vigour for him. It yields strength to Indra. On account of this amulet of Bṛhaspati, Candramas conquered the golden cities of Dānavas and Asuras. He also tied the amulet on the body of wind (Vāta) (10. 6. 6-11). Through *audumbara* amulet, he grants abundance of cattle, food, juice and plants (19. 31. 5).

In the marriage rites Bṛhaspati plays a very important role. He hands over the bride to the bridegroom. The new garment, which the bride wears on the occasion of the marriage ceremony, is given by Tvaṣṭṛ, under the direction of Bṛhaspati, one of the Kavis. He increases the bride with progeny. He plaited the hair on the head of Sūryā on the occasion of her marriage (14. 1. 52-55). While sprinkling the fragrant powder on the head of the bride on the occasion of the marriage, the bride is released by Bṛhaspati from his possession and is handed over to Viśvedevas (14. 2. 55-58). The garment which the bride wears is given to the priest, who invokes Bṛhaspati that it should be handed over to him (14. 2. 42). He thus bestows the auspicious bride, not killing cattle and relatives, on the bridegroom (14. 1. 62).

The sorcerers are brought under his control by Bṛhaspati, who makes them declare themselves (1. 8. 2).

Bṛhaspati rectifies the defects in mind or speech of a person, so that Sarasvatī should not leave him, being possessed of anger (19. 40. 1). Bṛhaspati gave a garment for king Soma to put on. The same garment is given to a person for wearing, to protect himself

[1] WHITNEY (AV) interpretes the word *ākūti* as designs. Sāyaṇa explains the word as the word forming the essence of all speech. Compare his comments on 19. 4. 3.

[2] Cf. RV X. 14. 3, which is the same as AV 18. 1. 47.

against imprecations. Bṛhaspati assures that by wearing the garment the man becomes of golden colour, unaging, possessed of excellent heroes and dying only in old age (19. 24. 4, 5, 8). Bṛhaspati is the stern executor of punishment inflicted on a person, who cooks Vaśā (barren) cow at his house (12. 4. 38). Nārada explains to Bṛhaspati the dangerous consequences of killing for the purpose of eating the Viliptī and the Sūtavaśa cows by a non-Brāhmaṇa (12. 4. 44).

Bṛhaspati is invoked to bring cattle safe from the pasture to the stalls (2. 26. 2). He bestows lustre on the singer (2. 29. 1). He, the leader, leads his singer to better luck and prosperity (7. 8. 1). He releases the singer from the existence in the other world of Yama and from malediction (7. 53. 1).

Poets enjoy companionship with Bṛhaspati, a *kavi* (poet) himself (7. 104. 1). The medicinal herbs are urged by Bṛhaspati to yield their medical qualities (6. 96. 1).

### (27) Prajāpati

The word occurs about 80 times in the AV. As the very name suggests, Prajāpati is the lord of the creatures. He generates the creatures (7. 19. 1). He moves inside the womb, not being seen, but is manifoldedly born (10. 8. 13). He is the first to be born of *ṛta* (13. 1. 61). He is also called Parameṣṭhin (9. 3. 11). This Highest Lord of the creatures is born of Kāla (19. 53. 10). The golden seed standing in the primeval waters is Prajāpati in secret (10. 7. 41). Prajāpati manifests himself to his creatures, whenever it thunders in the clear sky (9. 1. 24). Thunder is the voice of Prajāpati (7. 1. 10). He fashioned the thirty-three worlds from the sacrificial Odana (cooked rice) (11. 3. 52). He maintains all worlds (10. 7. 7). Ekāṣṭakā (the 8th day in the dark half of the month of Māgha, the beginning of the new year) is his daughter (9. 10. 24). Also Sabhā (assembly) and Samiti (gathering) are the two daughters of Prajāpati (7. 12. 1). The gods Upoha (one who brings together) and Samūha (one who gathers together) are his servers at the table (3. 24. 7).[1]

Prajāpati is Virāj (the shining deity, 9. 10. 24). He is a bull with vigorous energy (4. 4. 2). The sacrificial bull is Prajāpati himself (4. 11. 7). Prajāpati is Brahmacārin (11. 5. 16), Rohita (13. 2. 39) and Vrātya (15. 1. 2).

Prajāpati causes rain. He sends the water from the oceans and seas, and excites the ocean (4. 15. 11).

This highest deity of creation also is employed in magical rites. Prajāpati tied himself the *astṛta* amulet first, for securing valour (19. 46. 1). He increases the progeny of cattle (2. 34. 4). In a rite for conception (*garbhādhāna*) Prajāpati sprinkles the seed (*retas*), while Viṣṇu arranges the uterus and Tvaṣṭṛ fashions the com-

[1] Sāyaṇa on 3. 24. 7.

plexion of the forthcoming body (5. 25. 5). In a rite for securing the birth of a male child, Prajāpati is invoked. According to him, the seed growing in a male, being sprinkled in a female secures the birth of a son (6. 11. 2). He is invoked, along with Sinīvālī and Anumati, who shape the child, to bestow the birth of male child and that of a female to take place elsewhere (6. 11. 3). He is also invoked to give splendour, fame, and prosperity (6. 69. 3). Prajāpati, medically treats the boy who undergoes the tonsure rite (*godāna* 6. 68. 2).

### (28, 29) SABHĀ AND SAMITI (7. 12)

Sabhā is an assembly and Samiti is the gathering of people. These are the two daughters of Prajāpati (7. 12. 1). Nariṣṭha[1] is the name of Sabhā (7. 12. 2ab). Sabhā and Samiti are invoked to be of one mind in conferring favour on the person, who speaks to the gathering. They are further invoked to make the members of the assembly sympathetic to the speaker (7. 12. 2cd).

### (30) PAŚUPATI

He is the lord of the beings or cattle. He rules over all bipeds and quadrupeds. He is invoked to come to the sacrifice, granting abundance of wealth to the sacrificer (4. 34. 1).

### (31) VĀSTOṢPATI

He is the lord of the dwellings. He is invoked to bring about harmony in the house, so that the contending members of the house should stay in the same house happily and should not go away. They should find satisfaction in the same house (6. 73. 3).

### (32) DHANAPATI

He is the lord of wealth. He is the same as Kubera Vaiśravaṇa, who became the calf of Virāj, when she came to the other folks. Rajatanābhi, the son of Kubera milked concealment from her. On that milk of concealment the other folks maintain (8. 10. 9-12). Dhanapati is invoked to make the wooer willing to marry the girl, who calls for his help to settle her marriage. Also all things in the world are expected to be agreeable to her marriage through the favour of Dhanapathi (2. 36. 6).

### (33) VIŚVAKARMAN

He is the creator of the universe. He fashioned the earth. He followed Bhūmi, who was concealed in the ocean or in the *rajas* (mist), with an oblation to her and took her out (12. 1. 60). He is

[1] Sāyaṇa (7. 12. 2) explains the word *nariṣṭhā* as imperishable. WHITNEY (p. 397) explains it as 'sport'. BLOOMFIELD (p. 138) understands it as 'mirth'. It should rather mean 'sitting among men'.

invoked to bring abundance of cattle to the worshipper (2. 34. 3). In the AV he is chiefly invoked to expiate the errors in the sacrifice, which is wrongly performed. The patron or the institutor of the sacrifice committed some mistake in the performance of sacrifice[1] and even though Soma was drunk, the priests did not prosper (2. 35. 1). The error in the sacrifice seems to be due to the impression of the sacrificer that the priests were not worthy of sacrifice or that he allowed some unworthy persons to drink Soma (2. 35. 3). As a result of this error the sacrificer felt distressed about his children (2. 35. 2). But the seers, who were terrible and possessed formidable eyes and truthful mind, rearranged the performance of the sacrifice. They invoked Viśvakarman to make good the difficiencies in the sacrifice and to invite other gods at the sacrifice newly performed (2. 35. 5).

### (34) Tvaṣṭṛ

He is the divine architect. He fashioned *vajra*, the thunderbolt for Indra (2. 5. 6). He knows all forms of the cattle (2. 26. 1). He fashioned the heaven and the earth with all their forms and creatures (5. 12. 9). He sets a male germ in the groins of a woman to be born as a son in the tenth month (5. 25. 11). In another rite for the birth of a male child he ties an amulet of gold on a woman telling her to be the mother of a son (6. 81. 3). He develops embryos, shapes all forms and creates husband and wife for each other. He assigns husband to a woman to be her lord. He grants long life to the couple (6. 78. 3). Thus the primary function of Tvaṣṭṛ is to propogate the race. In the marriage rite he puts a robe on the bride (11. 1. 53). He removes jealousy (7. 74. 3). He has a daughter by name Saraṇyu. He gave her to Vivasvat in marriage. He prepared for the wedding of his daughter and the world passed through (3. 31. 5).[2]

### (35, 36, 37) Biṣkalā, Sūṣā and Sūṣaṇā

These goddesses are invoked at the time of the birth of a child. Sūṣā is invoked to unclose the embryo (1. 11. 3). Whitney[3] reads [illegible] for Sūṣā. Sāyaṇa[4] understands her to be a deity presiding

[1] Sāyaṇa on 2. 35. 1 points out that the sin committed by the patron of the sacrifice was the nonpayment of the priestly fees.

[2] Sāyaṇa interprets this stanza in this way: Tvaṣṭṛ arranges for the dress or ornaments to be given with the daughter while she is going to her new home. [illegible] understands in this manner: "Tvaṣṭṛ sees the world is dowry". Whitney [illegible] takes "vahatu" to be "a wedding car". I have followed Bloomfield, p. 81 [illegible]

[3] See p. [illegible]

[4] See his commentary on 1. 11. 3. Whitney, p. 11 considers that [illegible] possibly the names of the organs. But they seem to be the new AV deities along with Sūṣā.

over the child-birth. Sūṣaṇā loosens the embryo (1. 11. 3). Biṣkilā lets out the embryo (1. 11. 3).

### (38) Arāti

Arāti is a goddess having golden complexion. She is lovely. She rests on golden cushions. She wears golden robes (5. 7. 10). She has a missile by means of which she frustrates the wishes of the people and brings them failure. She is oppressive and piercing. She has power of baffling the wish or speech of others. She always brings about misfortune (5. 7. 1, 7). She, becoming a naked woman attaches herself to the people in their sleep, frustrating their thoughts and wishes (5. 7. 8). She is identified with Nirṛti, the goddesses of misfortune (5. 7, 9). She is invoked not to stand in the way of a man's prosperity, sacrificial reward and desires (5. 7. 1). She is thus a deity presiding over niggardliness and mental frustration.

### (39) Nirṛti

Nirṛti is a deity presiding over destruction, death and ill-luck. She arrests the persons with her snares. By means of the *brahman* (spell) a person is freed from her snares (2. 10). Her snares are nothing but the unreleasable fetters of Mṛtyu (3. 6. 5). She ties the snares to the necks of the persons (6. 63. 1). Her mouth is terrible (6. 84. 1). She has golden locks of hair (5. 7. 9). Her messenger is a black bird, which indicates destruction (7. 64. 1-2). She is invoked to be far away from the creatures and to free them from her fetters (7. 42. 1).

### (40) Svapna

Evil mind is the cause of bad dreams. It utters the things not to be uttered. Therefore it is asked to go away to the trees and woods (6. 45. 1). Svapna is neither alive, nor dead. He is the immortal embryo of the wives of the gods. Varuṇanī is his mother. Yama is his father. His name is Araru.[1] He is the agent of Yama. He is Antaka and Mṛtyu (6. 46. 1-2). He is also the son of Grāhī, Nirṛti, Abhūti, Nirbhūtī and Parābhūti (all these spirits of death, destruction, defeat and misfortune, 16. 5. 1-10, 19. 57. 3). All evil dreaming is asked to go the rivals, haters and enemies of one, who has dreams (16. 7-8). The *brahman* (spells) is made the defence against evil dreams (7. 100. 1). Food eaten in the dream disappears in the morning. All that food in dream is hoped to be propitious (7. 101. 1). Thus all evil dreaming (*duṣvapna*) is bad life, demon, monster, hag, illnamed and ill-voiced one. In a love charm Sleep is addressed to cause all persons in the house asleep till next morning so that he may approach his beloved (4. 5. 7).

[1] This is a name of a demon. Cf. TB 3. 2. 9.

### (41) PĀPMAN (6. 26)

Pāpman is a deity presiding over sin or evil. He is an immortal with thousand eyes (6. 26. 3). He controlls all (6. 23. 1b). He is invoked to be gracious to the singer and to set him uninjured in the world of the auspicious (6. 26. 1cd). He is asked to go away at the cross roads (6. 26. 2).

### (42) GANDHARVAS

Gandharvas, with the Apsarasas, form a class of semi-divine beings. Gandharvas and Apsarasas are mentioned along with Devas, Pitṛs and men (11. 7. 27, 10. 9. 9) and with Sarpas (serpents) and holy folks (11. 9. 24). Veṇa is described as Gandharva (2. 1. 2). Visvāvasu is a heavenly god, having his residence in the heaven. He is the divine Gandharva,[1] who is the lord of the beings, the only one to receive praise among men (2. 2. 1). He is worshipful. He has skin like the sun. He removes the anger of the gods (2. 2. 2). He is among the Apsarasas and is united with them, who are blameless (2. 2. 3). Virāj went to the Gandharvas and Apsarasas. Citraratha, a son of Suvarcas, became her calf. Vasuruci another son of Suvarcas milked holy fragrance from her. On the holy fragrance they live (8. 10. 2). The Gandharvas are associated with fragrance, which they receive from Bhūmi (12. 1. 23). They also live on *avakā* (moss) plants (4. 37. 8).

But the Gandharvas seem to have illegal passion for mortal women. They wear crests and dance to bewitch women. They are threatened to have their testicles split up and generative organs bound (4. 37. 7). They make themselves lustrous and scorch others with their heat.[2] The Gandharvas assume different forms such as of a dog, or a monkey, or a boy having hair all over the body. Making themselves pleasant or lovely to the eyes, they attach themselves to women. All these Gandharvas are reminded that they are immortals and that their wives are the Apsarasas so they should not have intimacy with the mortal women (4. 37. 11-12).

Their number is either thirty-three, three hundred or six thousand (11. 5. 3).

The Gandharvas know the medicinal herbs (8. 7. 23). They utilised their knowledge of medicine, when they dug out a root of *kapittha*[3] to treat for the restoration of virile power of Varuṇa, who had lost it (4. 4. 1).

[1] Sāyaṇa (2. 2. 1) understands that Sūrya is Gandharva and Apsarasas are the rays of the sun. He quotes from TS 3. 4. 7. 1; TS 3. 4. 7. 1 also mentions Gandramas as Gandharva.

[2] WHITNEY p. 213 takes these to be the attributes of *piśacas* mentioned in 4. 37. 10b. I take them to be the attributes of Gandharvas, who are qualified here with their other attributes along with *avakāda*, which is already mentioned in their connection formerly. Cf. 4. 37. 8.

[3] See Sāyaṇa on 4. 4. 1.

The Gandharvas eat offerings in sacrifice (4. 37. 9). A person offering *brahmaudana sava* dwells with Yama and enjoys the company of Gandharvas who drink Soma (4. 34. 3).

With a plant *ajaśṛṅgī* (4. 37. 10) and an amulet of *śatavāra* (19. 36. 6) they are kept away.

### (43) Apsarasas

Literally the word means those who enjoy water. Thus they are water nymphs. In the AV they occur as the wives of the Gandharvas (2. 2. 5). They are divine beings. Their home is the ocean (waters of the atmosphere). From that place they at once come and go (2. 2. 3). Viśvāvasu is particularly mentioned to be their consort (14. 2. 35). They have various names. Abhriyā (cloudy one), Didyut (shining) and Nakṣatriyā (starry one) are attached to the Gandharva, Viśvāvasu (2. 2. 4). Then there are Klandās (noisy ones), Tamiṣicis (dusky), Akṣakāma (loving dice), Manomuhā (confusing mind, 2. 2. 5), Guggulu, Pīlā, Naladi, Āukṣagandhi, Pramandanī (4. 37. 3), Ugraṁpaśyā, Ugrajitā and Rāṣṛabhṛt (6. 118. 1) Rathajitā and Rāthajeyī (6. 130. 1).

The Apsarasas, like the Gandharvas like to associate themselves with human beings and harass them. They enter the bodies of human beings and trouble them. With a plant, *ajaśṛṅgī* they are recognised. As soon as they are found out they obey the command of the magic spell and are driven away to a stream of water (4. 37. 3) or to the trees such as *nyagrodha*, *aśvattha* with big crests (4. 37. 4), or to a place where there are white or green swings or where the cymbals and lutes are played together (4. 37. 5). They are also mentioned among the evil spirits such as *piśācas* and *rākṣasas* (12. 1. 50). Some are accompanied by dogs and look like jackals (11. 9. 15).

They are fragrant. They store in them the fragrance which arises out of the earth (12. 1. 23).

As the Apsarasas confuse the mind, they are invoked to release an insane person from madness (6. 111. 4).

The Apsarasas preside over dice and gambling. The Apsaras, Ugraṁpaśyā and Ugrajit are invoked to redeem the gambler from the debt incurred in handling dice (6. 118. 1). Agni is prayed to carry the oblation of ghee to them, who take delight in moving between the earth and the sun, so they may fill the hands of the invoking gambler with ghee and win over the opponent in gambling (7. 114. 2-3).

Arbudi makes visible the deadly forms of the Apsarasas along with those of the Gandharvas, serpents and other divine folks, to terrify the enemy (11. 9. 15).

The Apsarasas also control Smara (the god of love). Rathajitā and Rāthajeyā are the Apsarasas, who possess Smara and inspire love among the others, when invoked (6. 130. 1).

The Apsarasas, like the Gandharvas live on the holy fragrance (8. 10. 27).

### (44) Āśāpāla (1. 31).

The guardian of the quarters. There are four immortal guardians of the quarters. They preside over all existence. They guard all quarters. They are invoked to free a person, who invokes with an oblation of ghee from the snares of Nirṛti and distress. The sacrificer prays that he should offer sacrifice to him without being deficient in any limb of his body (1. 31. 1-3).

### (45) Smara (6. 130-132).

Smara is the personification of the feelings of love. On Smara, burning with pangs, the gods, Viśvedevas, Indrāṇī, Indra and Agni sprinkled the waters. This Smara is urged by the love-lorn woman for securing a man, whom she likes (6. 132. 1-4). The gods are invoked to send forth Smara and make the man love the woman. Smara belongs to the Apsarasas, who conquer the chariot (Rathajits). With the all-conquering power of the Apsarasas, Smara makes the man crazy for the woman, who invokes the power of Smara (6. 130. 1-4). From head to the feet, longing for the woman is produced in the mind of the man. Even if he runs away from her, he comes back to be the father of their sons (6. 131. 1-3).

### (45) Manyu

Anger of the lover is appeased by his beloved or vice versa. Manyu is the personification of anger. Manyu is taken out of the mind and the two thus become like one-minded friends. Manyu is trampled upon with the heel and front foot, so that the partner would not speak irresponsibly and would submit to the desires of others (6. 42. 1-3). The amulet of *darbha* appeases fury in the mind of both, who have quarrelled together (6. 43. 1-3).

Manyu[1] also figures in the AV as the great lord of the creation, full of knowledge. His wife is the miraculous power of creation. He brought his wife from the house of Samkalpa, the impulse for creation. Penance and action were the friends of the bridegroom. The Brahman was the chief wooer (11. 8. 1-2). From Manyu, produced gods, who in turn produced ten gods, viz. breath, expiration, sight, hearing, inexhaustible power of knowledge, exhaustible power of action, out-breathing, up-breathing, speech and mind (11. 8. 3-4). Manyu fashioned a human body and then ten deities entered into it. These deities are also called the gods by name Samsic (who pour together 11. 8. 10, 13). The wife of Manyu brought colour or complexion to the human body (11. 8. 17). Then the Brahman

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa's explanation of the word Manyu in his commentary on 11. 8. 1. Whitney renders the word as 'fury'. See p. 647.

entered the human body (11. 8. 30). Manyu as the Brahman thus created the human body and filled it with good and bad thoughts and action. Man, therefore, is really known as the Brahman (11. 8. 32). After the death of the human being, one-third of the Brahman goes to the heaven, one-third to the hell and one-third remains on this world (11. 8. 33).

This is a brief account of Manyu conceived as the Creator of the human body.

### (47) Varcas

From the body of Aditi Varcas (Slendour) was born. Varcas is further born with elephants, kings and waters. On account of Varcas, the gods in the beginning rose to the dignity of good-hood (3. 22. 1, 3). Varcas is also born with Agni, Aśvins, Sūrya and the elephant of the Asuras (3. 22. 4).

### (48) Jariman (Old Age)

Old Age, Jariman, is addressed to allow a person to grow to old age and to spare him from hundreds of other deaths (2. 28. 1). Jariman is the master of the earthly creatures that are born and still to be born (2. 28. 3).

### (49, 50) Viśvajit and Trāyamānā

Viśvajit is a god who conquers all. Trāyamāṇa is a goddess who protects. Viśvajit is addressed to hand over the person, who prays him to Trāyamāṇā who is also designated as Kalyāṇī (the auspicious one), to protect both quadrupeds and bipeds (6. 107. 1-7).

This god and goddess seem to be the personification of the conquering and protective powers of the Creator.

### (51) Sarasvatī

She is a goddess presiding over learning. She urges the human mind to speak (5. 10. 8). She is a deity of fortune, offering protection to the human beings (6. 3. 2). She is invoked along with Ilā and Bhāratī in the Atharvaṇic Apri hymn (5. 27. 9). There are three Sarasvatīs (6. 100. 1). Sāyaṇa while commenting on this *ṛc* remarks that three Sarasvatīs include Ilā and Bhāratī along with herself. She presides over her heavenly domains (7. 68. 1). Offerings of ghee are offered to her, so that she may carry them to the Pitṛs. She is invoked to grant progeny and to be more sweet in speeches. The poet prays that he should not be separated from her (7. 68. 2-3). To enjoy the funeral sacrifices, she comes along with the Pitṛs. The pious and virtuous sacrificers invoke her in the funeral rites to grant them wealth and food (18. 1. 41-43).

In magical rites she, yoked with the mind is urged to find out a person, who is sought by the magical practitioner (5. 7. 5). She is invoked to fertilise the virile power of a man (4. 4. 6), to kill the

worms (5. 23. 1), to set the germ in the embryo of a woman in the rite of conception (5. 25. 3), to give protection (6. 3. 2), to bring the lover close to the woman, who pines for him (6. 89. 3), to reconcile the contending parties, so that they may be of one mind (6. 94. 3), to grant medicine against serpent bite (6. 100. 1), to make good, with ghee, whatever disorder one has in his body (7. 57. 1), and to rectify the errors in the performance of sacrifice (19. 31. 9). Sarasvatī is also asked to bestow abundance of wealth on the wearer of the *audumbara* amulet (19. 40. 1). Sarasvatī is also the name of a river (6. 30. 1).

### (52) SARASVAT

Under the direction of this god[1] all cattle go about, the waters stand and the lord of nourishment works. He is invoked to bestow prosperity on the sacrificer; for, he is the lord of prosperity, clothed in food and seated in the wealth (7. 40. 1-2).

### (53) MEDHĀ

Medhā is the personification of wisdom. Medhā is invoked to come to the seer with cows, horses and sun's rays. She is holy (6. 108. 1). Medhā, filled with the *brahman*, urged by the *brahman*, praised by the seers and drunk deeply by the Vedic students, is invoked for helping the gods (6. 108. 2). Ṛbhus, Asuras, seers who created beings and other seers knew Medhā, who is invoked to enter into the body of the seer, with the rays of the Sun (6. 108. 3-5). Medhā prevails in the morning, the noon and the evening (6. 108. 5 ab).

Medhā is thus invoked for help by the gods. Medhā is sharpened by the *brahman*, the spells. The seers and Asuras knew Medhā. She prevails for all time of the day.

### (54) TVIṢĪ (*brilliance* 6. 38).

Tviṣī is the fortunate goddess, who gave birth to Indra. Tviṣī is found in lion, tiger, adder, fire, Sūrya, elephant, leopard, gold, waters, cows, men, chariot, dice, power of a bull, wind, Parjanya, Varuṇa's vigour, Kṣatriya, drum, the drawn arrow, vigour of horse and cry of man. She is thus found in all brilliant things and actions. She is invoked to bring splendour (6. 38. 1-4).

### (55) VĀC

Vāc is auspicious and inauspicious. This is the fourth type of Vāc which is called *vaikharī*. The three others are deposited in the body of a person. Both kinds of speech, Vāc is asked to bear with pleasing mind (7. 43. 1).[2]

[1] Sāyaṇa on 7. 40. 1 points out that Sarasvat is the name of a god.

[2] This is the interpretation given by Sāyaṇa. See his comment. WHITNEY (p. 416) gives an obscure explanation.

### (56) Divine Speech

The Vedas are described as divine speech. A man is advised to turn to this speech leaving aside the popular one, with his friends (7. 105. 1).

### (57) The Vedic acts and the Veda

The Veda is extracted by means of vocal efforts and actions are performed accordingly. The Veda is taken out from its source by means of speech[1] (19. 68. 1).

### (58) Vedamātā (19. 71. 1)

The Veda is the mother of all. She gives boons. She is prayed to grant all desires. She bestows life, breath, progeny, cattle, fame, wealth and the Vedic splendour. She enables to realise the Highest Reality.

### (59) The Vedic Metres

Gāyatrī, Uṣṇik, Anuṣṭup, Bṛhatī, Paṅkti, Triṣṭup, and Jagati are invoked and offered homage (19. 21. 1).

### (60) The Parts of the AV.

Homage is paid to the books of the AV or the seers of the different books of the AV.[2] The first five *anuvākās* of the Āṅgirasas, sixth, seventh, eighth, black clans, green ones, smaller ones, *paryāyas*, first, second and third *śaṅkhās*, last but ones, last ones, next ones, the seers, peaked ones, *gaṇas*, the great *gaṇas*, the *gaṇa*-knowing Āṅgirasas, two thousand separate *ṛcs* and the *brahman* are paid homage. All heroic acts gathered round the Brahman, who stretched the sky in the beginning. The Brahman was first to be born among the creatures. Therefore none can contend with the Brahman (19. 22. 1-21).

It seems that the Āṅgirasas, who composed their part of the present AV, are paid homage here. The names of the seers or their grouping of *ṛcs* were lost sight of in the Ātharvaṇa redaction of the AV. No satisfactory explanation of these parts of the AV is given by either Sāyaṇa or Western scholars.[3] The parts of the AV in the Ātharvaṇa redaction of the AV, given in the hymn 19. 23 fairly agree with the present *Śaunaka* recension of the AV. So it seems that the parts of the AV given in 19. 22 may be belonging to an earlier redaction, which was worked out by the Āṅgirasas.

Homage is paid to the existing parts of the AV in the *Śaunaka* recension. The groups of the four *ṛcs* of the Ātharvaṇas, of five *ṛcs*,

[1] Sāyaṇa on 19. 68, gives another explanation. Through the individual and supreme soul, the Veda is known and then Vedic acts are performed.

[2] This is the view of Sāyaṇa. See his comment on 19. 22.

[3] See Whitney, p. 931.

of six *ṛcs*, of seven *ṛcs*—upto twenty *ṛcs*, and the great book, the Rohita, two Sūryās, two Vrātyas, two Prajāpati hymns, the Viṣāsahi, the book of good omen and the Brahman are paid homage. The present AV Saṁhitā seems to be intended in this homage to the parts of the AV.[1]

(61) Ṛṣis

The Ṛṣis formed a different class of creatures along with Devas, Asuras and Pitṛs (10. 10. 26). They are the first born sons of *ṛta* (10. 7. 14). The sages are terrible, sometimes, possessing formidable sight and actuality of mind (2. 35. 4). Their power is made bright by Agni (4. 23. 5). *Mekhalā* (girdle used in magical rites) is their weapon (6. 133. 2).

The sages are mentioned to be six in number (8. 9. 7). Sometimes the six twins of sages are identified with the six seasons of a year (9. 9. 11). Their number is sometimes mentioned to be twenty-one. The twenty-one sages departed by upward road, full of wind. Stepping over those that are lower, they bore back death (12. 2. 29). The ancient sages dwell in light, worshipping gods, eating and drinking oblations and travelling in the same chariot with Indra and the gods (18. 3. 47, 48). The sages participating in the funeral rites are asked to ascend to the highest heaven, without being afraid. They enjoy the Soma offered in the sacrifice (18. 3. 64). The sages of old made paths for many. Along with that path the deceased go to the ancient sages, who are born of *ṛta*, are furtherer and followers of *ṛta*, and born of penance and possessed of penance (18. 2. 21, 15, 18). Thus the Ṛṣis are identified with the Pitṛs. The Ṛṣis are the seers of the Āṅgirasa Veda and homage is paid to them (19. 22. 14).

There are divine sages and human sages (6. 41. 9). There is a group of sages called 'Saptarṣis', the seven sages. These seven sages know the seven milking of the sacrificial bull (4. 11. 9). Virāj, as a cow, came to the seven sages. Bṛhaspati Āṅgirasa milked from her the *brahman* (spell) and penance on which the seven sages live (8. 10. 25). Bṛhaspati thus formed one of the seven sages. The names of the seven sages are nowhere specified in the AV. They are invoked to bestow wealth and Brahmanical splendour on the singer (10. 5. 39).

The seven sages are also called 'being-makers', *bhūtakṛts* (11. 1. 1, 24). They churn the fire in the *brahmaudana sava* (11. 1. 8). These wise being-makers knew Medhā a deity presiding over wisdom or intelligence (6. 108. 4). Mekhalā, the girdle tied at the magical rites is the sister of the Being-makers (6. 133. 4). On the earth the ancient sages, who created beings, sang for the attainment of cows (12. 1. 31).

[1] See Whitney loc. cit.

There are a number of individual sages mentioned in the AV. These are: Agastya, Aṅgiras, Āṅgirasa, Atri, Atharvan, Ātharvaṇa, Ṛbhu, Kaṇva, Kaśyapa, Kavi, Gotama, Cyavana, Jamadgni, Dadhīca, Dīrghatamas, Navagvas, Nārada, Parāśara, Purumīḍha, Bṛhaspati, Bṛhaddiva, Bhṛgu, Medhātithi, Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Viśvāmitra, Vyaśva, Śyāvāśva, Vadhryaśva, Vimada, Saptavadhri, Bharadvāja, Gaviṣṭhara, Kutsa, Kakṣīvat, Triśoka, Uśanas, Mudgala, Sobhari and Arcanānas.

### (1) Agastya

He drove away demons, Gandharvas and Apsarasas with the help of *ajaśṛṅgī* plant (4. 37. 1). By means of his charm worms are crushed (2. 32. 3).

### (2) Aṅgiras and (3) Āṅgirasa

The word Aṅgiras in singular occurs five times and in plural about thirty times in the AV. The Āṅgirasas figure in the AV in these different aspects, viz. as gods, as Fathers and as seers. As gods, the Aṅgirasas are offered honey mixed with ghee along with the Ādityas (12. 3. 44). They are mentioned along with the Rudras, the Vasus, the gods in the heaven and Atharvan in an invocation for freedom from distress (11. 6. 13). Divine Atharvan and Aṅgiras abide in Kāla (19. 54. 5). Skambha, the highest deity, which supports the universe has the Āṅgirasas as his eyes and the Atharvāṅgiras Veda as his mouth (10. 7. 20, 34). In the battle-rite Āṅgirasas go on killing the armies of the enemy in the very middle of the battle-field, while the Viśvedevas smash them from above (8. 8. 31). Along with Viśvedevas, they are invoked to appease the flesh-eating fire (3. 21. 8).

Āṅgirasas are the Fathers worthy of the offering of Soma. They are invoked to curse a person, who causes hateful outrages (2. 12. 5). They along with the Vasus and the Ādityas and the merit derived from the gifts at the sacrifice and outside it, protect a person against his adversaries (2. 12. 4). They offered the *sava* of goat. On account of that goat they knew the radiant region (9. 5. 16). Thus reaching the heaven, they established themselves as the Holy Fathers along with their relations, Navagvas, Atharvas and Bhṛgus (18. 1. 58). They along with Vairūpas come to the funeral sacrifice on the earth (18. 1. 60). The departed soul rises on the high ridges of the heaven by that path, by which the Āṅgirasas, the conquerers of the earth (*bhūrjaya*) went up (18. 1. 6).

As seers they are connected with sacrifice, magic and magical sacrifice. As medicine men they produced the plant *kuṣṭha*, the healer of every disease (19. 39. 5). The *jaṅgiḍa* amulet gets the name Aṅgiras as it was made current by them (19. 34. 6). The snares of Aṅgiras and Āṅgirasas sit tight round a hateful person, by means of their spells and sacrifices (16. 8. 14). Atharvan made the

amulet of *khadira* tree and Ātharvaṇas tied it on their body. The Āṅgirasas, who are the same as the Ātharvaṇas on account of that amulet opened the fortress of the Dasyus and conquered them (10. 6. 20). As seers they had a very close association with Agni *vaiśvānara*, who made effective the hymn and prayers of Āṅgirasas (6. 35. 3). Mitra and Varuṇa protect them (4. 39. 3).

The Ādityas brought a sacrificial gift to Āṅgirasas. They did not take it. The descendants of Āṅgirasas later on took the gift, so that the intellectual pursuits and sacrifices should not be without leaders. They were, thus, the leaders of the sacrificial and intellectual activities (20. 135. 7). The Ādityas, Rudras, and Vasus again offered the sacrificial gift to Aṅgiras to please him (20. 135. 9-10). The Āṅgirasas are the authors of the AV to whom homage is paid (19. 22. 18).

### (4) Atri

The name occurs ten times in the AV. It occurs once only in plural. Atri is referred to in the AV in connection with the lifting of the sun from the sea (of air). Atri conducted Rohita to the sky out of the liquid (13. 2. 4). He established him there for creating the months (13. 2. 12). Atri thus found the unfailing light of Rohita, the impeller (13. 2. 36). Atris are mentioned along with Āṅgirasas and Navagvas as the sacrificers, rich in sacrificial fees bestowing gifts on others and pious (18. 3. 20). Atri is one of the Fathers invoked at the funeral sacrifice (18. 3. 15-16).

In the magical rites Atris are known for their practice of killing worms (2. 32. 3).

### (5, 6) Atharvan and Ātharvaṇa

The word Atharvan occurs 23 times, and once as Atharvāṅgirasa. Sixteen times it occurs in singular. The word Ātharvaṇa occurs six times in the AV, and only twice it occurs in singular.

Atharvan figures in the AV as a god, a Father and a seer. He is mentioned as Divine Atharvan along with Aṅgiras, as residing in Kāla (19. 54. 5). He is the kinsman of the gods, the father of Ātharvaṇas (7. 2. 1).

He is one of the Pitṛs, and is mentioned along with Āṅgirasas, Bhṛgus and Navagvas (18. 1. 58).

As a seer and priest of fire, Atharvan is the first sacrificer. He offered the first offering to Agni (19. 4. 1). He filled a ladle with oblation to be offered to Indra (18. 3. 54). Ātharvaṇa sings loudly in the evening, prayer for the god Savitṛ (6. 1. 1). Varuṇa gave a dappled cow to Atharvan (7. 109. 1). There is a dialogue[1] between Atharvan and Varuṇa who wants to take back the gift, he

[1] See under Varuṇa.

himself bestowed on Atharvan (5. 11. 2-11). Thus Atharvan himself being of the status of a god had a close association with the gods such as Indra, Varuṇa and Savitṛ. Varuṇa after an appeal made by Atharvan agreed to keep the speckled cow with Atharvan. Varuṇa then praises Atharvan as a god, who gives life to the gods and who praises him and as a sage strengthens the sage, who sings his glory (5. 11. 10-11). The poet then says that Varuṇa has begotten Atharvan, the kinsman of the gods and the Sire (5. 11. 11).

The present version of the AV consisting of twenty books of the *śaunaka śākhā* got the name of the eponymous seer Atharvan. The different books of the Veda are paid homage at 19. 23. The hymns composed by the Āṅgirasas are also paid homage at (19. 22). The Atharvāṅgiras is thus the name of the AV forming the mouth of Skambha (10. 6. 20). The Āṅgirasas form the eyes of Skambha. The Āṅgirasas saw the Veda and reproduced it from the mouth; thus the Veda got the name Atharvāṅgiras. The Veda of this *śākhā* was existing along with the other Vedas, but was known as 'unreal'. But people knew it as the great Veda. Inferior people considered that the Veda was real and worshipped it (10. 7 21).[1]

Atharvan is credited with the act of perfecting the structure of man, fashioned by the Brahman. Atharvan sewed together the head and heart of Man and sent forth Pavamāna from the brain out of his head. Thus the human head is the head of Atharvan, which is treasure of god. Breath, food and mind defend that head (10. 2. 26-27).

Atharvan is also known for the use of herbs in treating diseases. They are known as the plants of Atharvan, like those of Aṅgiras (11. 4. 16). Thus Atharvan and Aṅgiras were the medicine men of that time, sponsoring the use of herbs for curing diseases. He also used the plants for magical purposes. The plant *aiaśṛṅgī* is used by him to smite the demons (4. 37. 1). The snares of Atharvan are used in magical rites to tie down a hater with his life (16. 8. 16-17). Atharvan and Ātharvaṇas tied on themselves the amulet of *khadira* (*fāla*) and with the Aṅgirasas broke open the fortress of Dasyus (10. 6. 20).

### (8) Ṛbhus

The word occurs ten times in the AV. He is one of the three sons of Sudhanvan Aṅgiras. The other two sons are Vibhu and Vāja (6. 4. 8. 2). Ṛbhus were very intelligent sages (6. 108. 3). They fashioned a ladle for offering oblations in sacrifice. They were skilled in joining the parts of a chariot. They were expert bone-setters and used to treat any wound, caused by a fall or

[1] The *ṛc* is: *asacchākhāṁ pratiṭhantīṁ paramamiva janā viduḥ* | *uto sanmanyantesvare ye te śākhāṁ upāsate*

weapon or stone (4. 12. 7). They are described as pious and skilled artists (19. 11. 1). They are invoked in the third pressing of Soma (9. 1. 13).

### (9) Kaṇva

The word Kaṇva occurs in the AV in connection with a class of demons called Kaṇvas or a name of a sage. As a sage, Kaṇva is referred to as a founder of a process for killing worms with a plant known as *ajaśṛṅgi* (2. 32. 3; 4. 37. 1; 6. 23. 10). Kaṇva's plant gives life to a dangerously sick person and is used as a medicine curing all diseases (6. 52. 3). *Apāmārga*, a plant is blessed by Kaṇva Nārṣada (4. 19. 2).

Kaṇvas are mentioned as Pitṛs along with Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, etc., (18. 3. 15).

### (10) Kavi

The word Kavi seems to be used in the sense of family name (as Uśanas Kāvya) or as a wise person. The word occurs 40 times in the AV. Here Kavi is treated in the sense of a family name, having the sense 'intelligent person'. It seems there was a separate class of intelligent persons in the Vedic society called Kavis. They composed poems or prayers. Agni is a Kavi (5. 12. 1), so also are the Maruts (4. 27. 3). Yama is the Kavi of the Pitṛs (18. 3. 63). The Kavis formed the seven boundaries or paths of the world (5. 1. 6). Kavis named the two daughters of Kāma as Vāc and Virāj (9. 2. 5). Kavis constructed a house (9. 3. 1). The wise and intelligent Kavis called Ṛṣabha (the sacrificial bull) as Bṛhaspati (9. 4. 8). Kavis fashioned a ladle to be used in sacrifice (6. 47. 3). The luminaries give light to a thousand Kavis (7. 23. 1). Kavis are skilled in a thousand ways. They protect the sun and to them the departed souls go (18. 2. 18). The Kavis by name Arvāṇas were benevolent and invoked in the assembly (18. 3. 19).

It thus seems that the word Kavi stood for an intelligent person, skilled in arts and in the composition of poetry and accordingly it came to be applied as a name of the family of distinguished persons. It also seems that they were a class of the Pitṛs.

### (11) Kaśyapa

Kaśyapa is self-born sage. But he is also mentioned to have been born of Kāla (19. 53. 10). Kaśyapa is regular of the path of Rohita. He has something silvery and shining wherein are collected seven suns together (13. 3. 10). He is lustrous and bright (17. 1. 27). Kaśyapa and Gandharva lead upwards Rohiṇī, the seat of Rohita (13. 1. 23).

He is known for his magical formulas. With the *brahman* of Aśita Kaśyapa, the fortune of a girl is sealed (1. 14. 4). With a charm formulated by Kaśyapa, *yakṣma* is caused to be removed from the

limbs of the body (2. 33. 7). He seems to be a long-lived sage. Three times of his life-time are secured by puting on *pratisara* amulet (5. 28. 7), which was produced by Kaśyapa (8. 5. 14). Six sages urge Kaśyapa to tell Virāja to be friendly with them (8. 9. 7).

(12-22) Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, Vāmadeva, Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvāja, Gotama, Kakṣīvat, Purumīḍha, Śyāvāsva, Sobhari and Archanānas are some of the Pitṛs (18. 3. 15-16). Out of these Jamadagni dug out a plant for using it as a hair-tonic for the growth of the hair of his daughter (6. 137. 1). He also evolved a magical formula for killing worms (5. 23. 10). Bharadvājas sung songs for the poet (according to the tradition, one Bharadvāja, 2. 12. 2).

(23-31) Vadhyraśva, Vimada, Saptavadhri, Gaviṣṭhara, Kutsa, Medhātithi, Triśoka, Uśanas Kāvya and Mudgala. These are some of the sages, who are protected by Mitra and Varuṇa (5. 29. 3-6).

### (32) Navagvas

A class of Pitṛs (18. 1. 58, 3. 20). Probably they may be Āṅgirasas.[1] In a marriage rite the bridegroom comes to the house of the bride with his friends, who are called Navagvas (14. 1. 56).

### (33) Nārada

He occurs as a person to whom the dreadful consequences of robbing off the treasure of a Brāhmaṇa or of the Vaśā cow are narrated. He chose the terrible cow, Vilipti out of all cows (5. 19. 9, 12. 4, 16, 24, 41, 42, 43, 45).

### (34) Bhṛgu

Bhṛgu killed a demon by name Vala (2. 5. 3). He went to the heaven by offering sacrifice (4. 14. 3). He, with his descendants became a class of Pitṛs in the heaven like his relatives Āṅgirasas and Atharvans (18. 1. 58). It is possible that Bhṛgu may be a section of the Āṅgirasas owing to the traditional name, Bhṛgvaṅgiras as the seer of a number of the hymns of the AV (4. 11., 5. 4, etc.)

Vaitahavyas, the Sṛñjayas had become extremely prosperous. They were about to reach heaven. But they assaulted Bhṛgu, who defeated them. It seems that Bhṛgu and his descendants were roughly handled by Vaitahavyas. The Bhṛgus were robbed of their wives, cows and property. But they by means of their magical knowledge and their being the royal priests (the *purohitas*), weilded tremendous power of magical missiles and were thus able to defeat the Kṣatriyas (5. 19. 1).

### (35) Bṛhatsāman

He belonged to the family of Aṅgiras. It seems that this Āṅgirasa was also molested by a section of the Kṣatriyas. He was offered a

[1] See Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 437.

he-goat with two rows of teeth by some persons, which (goat) as a consequence of it consumed their own children (5. 19. 2).

(36) BṚHASPATI. *See* p. 325, (37) VAIRŪPAS

These are a class of the Pitṛs. They are mentioned along with Āṅgirasas (18. 1. 59).

(62) YATIS[1]

The word often means in the AV the flowing waters (3. 13. 2, 5. 21. 9, 6. 85. 3). At one place 2. 5. 3. according to Sāyaṇa they refer to a class of ascetics, who are devoid of any knowledge of the highest Brahman, mentioned in the Vedānta.

# IX

## THE MEDICINAL AND MAGICAL DEITIES

The seers of the AV consider the medicinal herbs, magical plants and amulets as divine objects. They contain divine power or they are related to the divine beings. I have collected here 104 such medicinal and magical deities. Firstly the general characteristic of plants and herbs are given. It is difficult to make a difference between magical and medicinal plants. However I have attempted to group together the plants which are more or less medicinally used (1-42). I have also arranged them according to their relative importance. There are amulets made from trees (43-58). The amulets are also made of metals and spells (59-62). Āñjana is also related to the gods (63). The diseases like Yakṣma, Takman and others are invoked to be far away from the suffering patient (64-74). The worms are addressed (75). The names of the serpents are mentioned in detail (76). Kṛtyā is then discussed in detail (79). Some magical objects are addressed to be propitious to the possessor and others (80-84). Arbudi, Nyarbudi and Triṣandhi are the magical missiles used in the warfare (85-88). A Brāhmaṇa, his wife and cow are possessed of great magical power (94-96). The cows, hawk, dogs, etc., are also addressed (97-104).

### Plants and Herbs

The AV contains a very important portion on medicine. A number of plants and herbs are mentioned to have medicinal effect. The Atharvaṇic medicine is very intimately associated with magic. It is sometimes difficult to draw a distinguishing line between these two. The medicinal and magical plants are addressed as divinities, potent with power to cure diseases. Keśava in his *Paddhati* points

[1] The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (7. 26-28) points out that Indra killed and handed over the Yati to the wolves.

out that there are two types of diseases, viz. those that arise on account of food and the others incurred by one, in his previous birth. Regarding the first type of the diseases, this cure is laid down in the treatises of Caraka, Suśruta, etc., and regarding the second type of diseases, the cure of the diseases is possible by the treatment of the Atharvaṇic charms. However in the administration of these various charms the medicinal value of the treatment is also sometimes considered. In this section I propose to discuss the deities, conceived by the Atharvaṇic poets, as residing in plants and herbs. The medicinal plant or herb is supposed to be a divine being and its help is sought by means of the charms in curing diseases.

**The general characteristics and description of these deities:**

The herbs have Soma as their king (14. 1. 17). The forest is also their king (8. 7. 16). They are impelled by Bṛhaspati (6. 96. 1). They are of all forms. They grow on the earth by means of the shower of rain (4. 15. 2-3). The herbs are of different colours. They are brown, bright, red, spotted, dark and black (8. 7. 1). They are spreading, bushy, one-horned or having single sheath and creeping. Some are rich in shoots and stalks. Some divide their branches, and are very strong. They belong to all gods (*vaiśvadevi* 8. 7. 4). Some are thousand-leafed (8. 7. 13). Some are sweet in their roots, tops, middle, leaves and blossoms. They possess honey. They are the food of immortality (8. 7. 12). Some are rich in flowers and shoots. Some have fruits and some are devoid of them (8. 7. 27).

The plants are the divinities (8. 7. 3). They contain power, force and might (*sahaḥ*, *vīrya* and *bala* 8. 7. 5). They are the food of Agni and the offsprings of waters. They grow ever new. The plants are firm and bear thousand names. They heal diseases (8. 7. 8).

Of these plants some have sky as their father and the earth as their mother and their root is in ocean (8. 7. 2). The plants are closely connected with the Āṅgirasas. They are descended from the Āṅgirasas. They grow on the mountains and in the plains. They are auspicious, rich in milk and comforting the heart (8. 7. 17). They are purchased and are very powerful (8. 7. 11). Some plants such as *jīvalā*, *naghāriṣa*, *jīvanti* and *arundhatī*, which remove diseases and which are full of blossoms are very useful (8. 7. 6). The *aśvattha*, *darbha*, Soma the king of plants, rice and barley are the immortal sons of heaven (8. 7. 20).

The plants are intelligent and capable of understanding the spells of the Atharvaṇic medicine man (8. 7. 7). The amulets made from the plants are like tiger in fierceness, and are the saviours and the protectors against hostile schemes. The diseases like *yakṣma* which are sent by the gods and others sent by the demons are all driven away by the plants. The diseases tremble and become

frightened in front of the plants. The diseases of men and cattle are driven away by the plants into the navigable streams (8. 7. 15). The plants have the strength of nectar and enable a person to live for hundred years (8. 7. 22).

The Atharvaṇic medicine men know the plants, which belong to the Āṅgirasas, and which are medically very valuable. The herbs of the Āṅgirasas are known also by the boar, ichneumon, serpents and Gandharvas. The eagles, *raghaṭas* (falcons), birds and swans, all winged creatures and wild animals know the divine Āṅgirasa plants (8. 7. 24). The plants which bulls, cows, sheep and goat eat contain medicinal qualities. When released from Agni Vaiśvānara[1] the plants spread on the ground. Out of these, the human physician knows the medicinal plants with his sight and along with the unknown plants he charges them with power.

The plants release a person from the dropsy sent by Varuṇa, from poison and *balāsa* and release one from the effects of witchcraft (8. 7. 10). They save a person from the fetters of Yama and sin against god (6. 96. 2). They save in the villages the life of cow, horses, man and beast (8. 7. 11).

Thus the Atharvaṇic priests knowing medicine claim to save life of animals and human beings in the villages, where they were much influential people, from the diseases and witchcraft, brought about by human and divine agencies. They consider that the plants are divinities and contain nectar, which would make people live for hundred years and which would not allow them to be taken away from this life prematurely.

Let us now turn to the detailed description of magical and medicinal plants.

### (1) Śara

It is *saccharum sara.* Its father is Parajanya and mother is Pṛthivī. Śara grows in rain. It is used in a cure against *atisāra* (1. 2. 1). It is otherwise called *tejana* or *muñja.*[2] It stands between heaven and earth in the form of *tejana*, so also as *muñja* it should stand between the disease and flux or excessive discharge of urine[3] (1. 2. 4). Also Śara is described as having Mitra, Varuṇa, Candra or Sūrya as its father (1. 3. 1-5). It is used for regulating discharge of retained urine and constipation. The VSS[4] also mentions śara to be used as a sort of enema for urination.

[1] BLOOMFIELD suggests that this should refer to Agni of the funeral pyre. But the sense seems to be that the plants should be spared by Fire from burning, so that the medicineman would use them. Cf. *SBE* Vol. XLII, pp. 578 ff.

[2] *Vaidya Śabdasindhu* by UMEŚACANDRA GUPTA, Calcutta, 1894. (Henceforth referred to as VSS) p. 1026.

[3] See WHITNEY, Vol. 7, p. 3. Also BLOOMFIELD, *JAOS*, Vol. xiii, p. cxiii. Sāyaṇa interpretes *tejana* as *veṇu*, a bamboo, but *VSS* loc. cit. gives it as a synonym of *śara* along with *muñja.*

[4] *Loc. cit.*

(2) Asiknī

It is described as *rāmā*, *kṛṣṇā*, *rajanī*. All these are found to be the names of *nīlī* plant.[1] Sāyaṇa understands the *oṣadhi* to be *haridrā*, *rāmā* to be *bhṛṅgirāja*, *kṛṣṇā* to be *indravāruṇī* and *āsiknī* to be *nīlī*. It is used as a cure against white leprosy (1. 23). The plant is night-born. It is dark black and dusky. It gives colour and is rich in colour. It is addressed to stain leprosy and gray spots on the body. It is asked to make the white spots fly away (1. 23. 1-2). Its hiding place is dusky, so also is its residence. It cures leprosy in bone, in body, in skin and the white spots begotten of witchcraft (1. 23. 4). As the plant *asiknī* or *nīlī* is dark in colour and its juice also being dark, the Atharvaṇic poet uses it in colouring the white leprosy spots on the body. It does not seem to possess any quality to cure leprosy as such.

(3) Āsuri

It is the bile of Suparṇa, that was first born. Āsuri having conquered Suparṇa and taken the bile from it, gave it to the trees for their colouring (1. 24. 1). The Asura-woman first made this remedy for leprosy and for making the skin of even and uniform colour. Sarūpā (even-coloured) is her mother and Sarūpa is her father. Sāyaṇa[2] takes these parents of Āsurī to be *bhūmi* and *dyaus*. Āsuri makes this plant a cure against white leprosy (1. 24. 2-3). Śyāmā is its another name. It produces even colour. It has to be taken out of the earth. It produces a new and uniform colour (1. 24. 4). VSS[3] mentions Āsuri as a plant, but means thereby white or red mustard. Sāyaṇa gives a legend. The dark plant (*nīlī*, etc.) was the gall of the primordial bird, Suparṇa (winged). An Asura-woman engaged in battle with him and conquered. The gall captured from him, she gave to the trees such as *nīlī*, etc.[4] The word *śyāmā* occurs as a synonym for *nīlī*.[5] Here again the medicinal quality of *nīlī* or *Śyāmā*[6] is different from what is intended here. The Atharvaṇic poet must have taken into account the dark complexion of the leaves of the plant and must have attributed the function of 'colouring' the white leprous spots on the body of the plants. Medicinal qualities

[1] See *VSS*, pp. 893, 871, 619, 314. *VSS* does not mention *asikni*, but *alkika*, *indigofera tinctoria*, see p. 3.

[2] See his comment of 1. 24. 3.

[3] See p. 122; also see *Dhanvantariya Nighaṇṭu* of Nārāyaṇa Śarma, p. 146. (Henceforth referred to as DN.)

[4] See Sāyaṇa on 1. 24. 1. The only difficulty in accepting this myth is the word *jitā*, which he interprets as *jitavatī*. Ludwig suggests *jītva* or *jitam*. Bloomfield, p. 268, remarks 'In general *asura* stands for the hostile powers conquered by the *devas*'. Āsuri is a name of a magic plant. See Magoun, *AJP*, X. 165. Weber considers Suparna as the Sun and Āsuri the night. See *Indischen Studen* 1, p. 418.

[5] See *VSS*, p. 1072.

[6] Cf. *VSS*, loc. cit.

of this plant Āsurī are intended to cure cough, boils and erruptions of skins.[1] They do not seem to be intended for curing leprosy or white spots on the body.

(4) TALĀŚĀ (6. 15)

This is the best of the herbs. All other trees are subject to it (6. 15. 1). Just as Soma is the highest recepient of the offering, so is this Talāśā among the trees (6. 15. 3). The highest position of Talāśa is utilised by the poet to effect a charm to be superior to all. Whosoever assails both kindered or otherwise be subject to the person, who effects this charm. He should be the highest among men like the trees (6. 15. 2-3). Śāyaṇa considers that *palāśa* or *parṇa* is the tree referred to here, as it is produced from Soma.[2] Kauśika[3] understands the reference to *yava* or barley. *Paippalāda* version of 6. 15. 30, reads *yava* for *talāśā*. This goes well with the purpose of the hymn, viz. tying of an amulet of barley as understood by Kauśika. With the reading *talāśā* we may compare the herb *talīśa* (Abies, webbiana or Pinus Webbiana or Flacourtia Caiaphracta). The name talāśā does not occur in the medical dictionaries. The plant *talīśā* is used in curing cough, consumption, etc.[4]

(5) ĀBAYU (6. 16)

Vihalha is the name of its father. Madāvatī is the name of its mother (6. 16. 2). This plant is so benevolent that it even suffers destruction of itself, while conferring benefit on others.[5] Its juice is very strong. Sāyaṇa reads Āvayu for Ābayu and understands that the mustard plant is intended to be addressed. The mustard plant, eaten or not eaten has very very strong juice. Gruel made with the leaves of Ābayu (mustard) is eaten (6. 16. 1). Kauśika refers to the mustard plant as intended here for curing the eye-disease.[6] The plant removes the eye-disease, caused by demons such as *tanvilikā*, *ailaba*, *babhru*, *babhrukarṇa* and *āla*. These names are of obscure meaning. Alasālā, Silāñāla (Sāyaṇa reads Śalāñjalā) and Mīlāgalasālā are the names of corn bearing shrubs. These cannot to traced in the medical dictionaries. Following Sāyaṇa and Kauśika we can understand that these plants were used in a charm against eye-diseases.[7]

(6) KEŚAVARDHINĪ (16. 21)

This remedy for growing hair is plucked from the earth, which is the highest of the three earths.[8] This is the most excellent of the

[1] Cf. *VSS*, loc. cit. [2] See also TB 1. 1. 3. 10. [3] 19. 26.

[4] Cf. *VSS*, p. 493. Also see *Rajanighanṭu* (referred to as RN henceforth) Chapter 6.

[5] See BLOOMFIELD, p. 466. [6] 30. 1-6

[7] Madā occurs in *VSS*, p. 772 as a name of *dhālaki* tree. Babhru is a name of a kind of fever called *sannipāta*, See *VSS*, p. 725.

[8] The three world viz. *pṛthivī*, *antarikṣa* and *svarga*.

remedies and the best of the plants. Soma (the moon) is its lord in the watches of the night and Lord Varuṇa among the gods. These hair-growing plants are rich in medicinal qualities and generally bestow on the patients their benefits. They strengthen and increase the hair. The hymn does not refer to any special plant as such, to bring about the growth of hair. Sāyaṇa[1] refers to *haridrā* as the plant referred to. Kauśika[2] explains the symbolism in this medical rite by comparing the growth of hair on the head with the trees growing on the earth and burning the plants growing under the trees. VSS[3] mentions a creeper by name Keśavardhinī and calls it as *mahābalā* creeper.

### (7) ŚAMĪ (6. 30)

It is a tree of great leaves. It is increased by *ṛta* and rain. The blessed one (Śamī) is prayed to be kind to the hair (6. 30. 3). With loosened hair, it causes intoxication and makes a man ridiculous. With hundred branches it is prayed to grow on as the trees round about it are cut off (6. 30. 2). According to VSS[4] Śamī (*Prosopis spicigera*) is injurious to the hair. It is described as *keśamanthanī, keśahantrī*. The purpose of the hymn seems to be to praise Śamī to be kind to the hair on the head and save a man from being laughed at in their absence.

### (8) PUTUDRU

This plant is used to cure a person, who is seriously ill and is almost in a dying state. It is the body of Agni. It kills demons and rivals. This wonder remedy cures diseases (8. 2. 28). VSS[5] refers to the plant Putadru and identified it with *palāśa* tree. Sāyaṇa reads Putatru. Kauśika (58. 15) seems to refer to Pūtudāru by the word Putudru. It is explained by Keśava as *devadāra*. At any rate it does not seem to have such wonderful powers to raise a man from the darkness of death, as it is expected to do from the contents of the hymn (6. 2).

### (9) JIVANTĪ

This herb is preserving, overpowering and powerful. It is invoked to save a man who is dangerously ill, perhaps from consumption or disturbance in three humours of the body (8. 2. 6).[6]

### (10) JĪVALĀ

Jivalā is also a plant used to cure a dangerously ill person (8. 2. 6).[7]

[1] See Sāyaṇa on 16. 21. 2.
[2] See 30. 8-10.
[3] See p. 319.
[4] See p. 1024.
[5] See p. 690.
[6] See *VSS*, p. 468.
[7] WHITNEY does not seem to take these words to be the names of plants. BLOOMFIELD takes them to be the names of the plants. Sāyaṇa understands the plant *paṭā* intended here. *PPP* adds *arundhatī* in the last part of the stanza. So according to *PPP arundhatī* plant is intended here.

(11) THE CREEPER OF KAṆVA

This creeper increases life. It is famous for curing all diseases. It pacifies all unseen calamities on the life of a person (6. 52. 3). Sāyaṇa understands the creeper of Kaṇva to be Śāntā or Śamī.

(12) MADHU

This plant is born of honey. It is intended to make the speech, thought and actions of a person pleasant and sweet (1. 34. 1. 3). Sāyaṇa explains that the plant is produced from honey. It is also named as Madhūlaka (1. 34. 2). VSS[1] mentions a plant by name Madhūka (*Bassia latifolia*). Its qualities are the same as those of Madhu. It is chewed while entering in an assembly to win success in dispute, according to Kauśika (38, 17). An amulet of licorice wood (*madhughā*) is put on by the bride-groom, fastening it with thread coloured red with lac and is put in the little finger so that the knot is inside.[2] Thus the plants Madhu, Madhulā and Madhulā have the same effect i.e. to be pleasing and sweet to others. Medicinally speaking, the plant has the quality to produce the intended effect.

(13) MADHULĀ (5. 15).

It is born of *ṛta* and is rich in *ṛta*. It is called upon to make the person sweeter (5. 15. 1). Kauśika (19. 1) empolys the hymn and the plant in curing the diseases of cattle. The same plant has been used as a remedy against stinging insects (7. 56. 2). It also removes the poison of the cross-lined (*tirascirāji*) snake, black snake, adder, and *kaṅkaparvan* snake (7. 56. 1). This use of the plant to cure poisonous bites does not seem to be warranted by the medical treatises.[3] A plant by name Madhurā is identified with a plant Śatāvarī.[4]

(14) SAHASRAKĀṆḌA (2. 7).

This plant is born of gods and is hated by mischief-mongers. It effaces all curses, whether they have come from the rival, sister or Brāhmaṇa (2. 7. 1-2). Its root is in heaven and is spread on the earth. It is invoked to grant protection on all sides. It has thousand shoots, hence it is called Sahasrakāṇḍa (2. 7. 3). Sahasrakāṇḍa is the name of white *dūrvā* plant, which is used as a cure against the attacks of evil spirits.[5]

(15, 16, 17) ARJUNAKĀṆḌA, YAVA AND TILA (2. 8).

Out of these three Arjunakāṇḍa or Arjuna tree is used in removing the Kṣetriya disease. It is accompanied by the white stalks

[1] P. 780. [2] Kauśika 76. 8. [3] VSS, p. 780-81.

[4] RN, 3, 4, 7 and 11. It is sweet and is used to cure diseases arising from cough, wind and bile. It increases virile power of a person. *See* VSS p. 1023.

[5] P. 69.

of barley and blossom with sesame of the sesame. VSS[1] describes the Arjuna tree (*tarminalia Arjuna* or *Pentaptera Arjuna*) as curing consumption and poisoned blood. This seems to be the meaning of the Kṣetriya disease.

### (18) Pṛśniparṇī (2, 25).

The goddess Pṛśniparṇi confers prosperity on men and causes distress to Nirṛti. It is a formidable devourer of the domonic creatures called Kaṇvas, which eat away the embryo of women. The plant is very powerful (2. 25. 1). It was born powerful (2. 25. 1-3). The goddess Pṛśniparṇī is invoked to drive away the Kaṇvas to the mountains and to go after burning them. Sāyaṇa paraphrases the term Pṛśniparṇī as Citraparni. VSS[2] notes Citraparṇī as the synonym for Pṛśniparṇī. It is used against burning fever, cough, dysentery and every-day-fever. In the AV also it is used against Kaṇvas, who drink the blood of a person and take away the normal and life (*jīvitayopana*, 2. 25. 4).

### (19) Pāṭā (2. 27).

It overpowers and overcomes the opponents in disputation and makes them sapless (2. 27. 1). Eagle discovered and a swine dug it out (2. 27. 2). Indra put it on his arm and consumed it to defeat the Asuras (2. 27. 3, 4). VSS[3] describes the plant Pālalā plant as *stephania hernandifolia*. Its skin is hairy and has white flowers. Kauśika (38. 18-21) employs Pāṭā for the purpose, given in the hymn. Its root seems to have been used (2. 27. 2).

### (20) A plant used in winning the love of a woman (2. 30. 3-5)

Sāyaṇa points out that the bark of a tree, a piece of reed, salve, and pieces of Kuṣṭha plant are to be powdered and mixed with ghee. This mixture is to be applied to the body of a woman, whom one loves. Kauśika (35. 21) explains the rite as follows: two chips of a tree and a creeper on it, an arrow, *sthakara*-powder, salve, *kuṣṭha*, sweet wood and stalk of grass torn by wind are all powdered and mixed with ghee and used as before. So the plant referred to, seems to be stalk of grass (*tṛṇa*).

### (21) A plant used in recovering virility (4. 4).

Varuṇa lost his virility. To recover it, Gandharvas dug up this plant (its root). It makes the member erect and stout. It makes him full of energy (4. 4. 1-3). The plant is the sap of waters. It is first born among all forest trees. It is the brother of Soma. It is the lusty force of black antelope (4. 4. 5). Sāyaṇa understands the plant

[1] VSS, p. 554 and RN, 8.

[2] P. 694.

[3] P. 652.

referred to as the root of Kapitthaka tree (*Feronia elephantum*). VSS[1] mentions among others a quality of this tree to increase virile power.

### (22) VARAṆA OR VARAṆĀVATĪ (*Crateava roxbughii*, 4. 7).

In this plant[2] nectar is sprinkled. With that, poison in the body is warded off (4. 7. 1). The poison becomes powerless in all directions (4. 7. 2). If a person through hunger has eaten a gruel containing poisonous substance the plant called Madāvatī removes the intoxicating effect of the poison (4. 7. 4). It is purchased with straw-broom, garments and skins. It is a thing for barter. It is dug up with spade (4. 7. 6). The plant Mada is identified with Dhālakī. It has got the quality of curing a person of poison and causing intoxication. It is the same as Madāvatī. At 6. 85. 1 the plant Varaṇa is described as a divine tree. It wards off *yakṣma* entering in the body of a person.

### (23) ROHIṆĪ (4. 12).

It is called Rohaṇī because it grows blood. It grows the severed bone, puts together marrow, blood, joints and flesh (4. 12. 1, 3). Similarly if one has fallen into a pit and been crushed or if a stone, hurled at him, has hit him, the plant is called upon to cure it (4. 12. 7). Arundhatī has been called Rohaṇī which may be identified with Candana, or sandal wood.[4] Arundhatī seems to be the name of a climbing plant having healing properties.[5] The commentator understands *lākṣā*, as the healing substance used here. This name however, does not occur in the present hymn. (4. 12).

### (24) APĀMĀRGA (*Achyranthis aspera*)

The plant is all-conquering. It is the mistress of all remedies. It is possessed of thousand powers (4. 17. 1). It is possessed of lustre like the day and night (4. 18. 1).[6] The plant kills natural and artificial enemies (4. 19. 1).[7] The plant is said to have been dis-

[1] P. 203.

[2] All western commentators take the term Varaṇāvatī as the name of a river. It does not appear to be so, as the plant by name Varaṇa and Varuṇa are found in VSS, pp. 939-40. Sāyaṇa interpretes it as a plant.

[3] VSS, p. 573.

[4] VSS, p. 903.

[5] WHITNEY, AV, Vol. I, p. 166.

[6] I have followed Sāyaṇa, who points out in the verse the brilliancy of the plant. BLOOMFIELD pp. 70 and 396, and WHITNEY, p. 181, translate differently, taking the *a*, *b* of 4. 18. 1 as general statement. BLOOMFIELD (loc. cit.) remarks 'The Athārvanist loves to point out cosmic correspondences and harmonies as the foundations of his own righteous undertakings'.

[7] This is Sāyaṇa's way of interpretation in which he points out that the plant kills two types of enemies, *abandhu* and *jāmi*, latter of which means the enemies from the blood relations. BLOOMFIELD pp. 71 and 397 and WHITNEY p. 183 take differently. BLOOMFIELD (loc. cit.) remarks that the plant has a double role of destroyer of enemies and protector of friends. He accuses Sāyaṇa of having erroneously derived the word *kṛt* in *abandhukṛt* from the root *kart* to cut. But the root is *kṛt* to cut, and not *kart*.

covered by Suparṇa (the divine eagle), and is said to have been dug by hog with its snout (5. 14. 1). The plant has been blessed by a Brāhmaṇa, by name Kaṇva, the son of Nṛṣad. It goes like a strong army fearing nothing wherever it goes (4. 19. 2). It goes at the head of the plants, spreading lustre. It rescues the innocent and kills the demonic persons (4. 19. 3). In the beginning the gods drove off the Asuras with the help of the plant. Hence the plant is called Apāmārga (wiping out). It has hundred branches and cuts to pieces the enemies. Its father's name is Vibhindan (splitting apart, 4. 19. 4-5). Great lustre, produced from this plant spread over the earth. It became witchcraft (*kṛtyārūpam*). The blazing lustre assaults the doer of the witchcraft (4. 19. 6). It grows backward and has its fruits also backwards (4. 19. 7). It is called the lord of the plants (4. 19. 8).

Following the etymological meaning of Apāmārga (*ap-mṛja*) the plant has been used in warding off or wiping off diseases, enemies, demons and sins. The plant, conquering the enemies, demons and sins, repells the curses (4. 17. 2). It smites the witchcraft, which men have made in raw-vessel or in a blue-red vessel, or in raw flash (4. 17. 3). Evil dreaming, evil-living, all ill-named and ill-voiced demons are smitten away with the help of the plant. It removes death by hunger and thrust. Also it removes defeat at the dice (4. 17. 5-7). It removes Kṣetriya disease and all witchcraft-makers (4. 18. 7). It wipes away the sin of being associated with black-toothed, ill-nailed and mutilated person (7. 65. 3).

Thus this plant is possessed of numerous powers capable of removing diseases and witchcraft. It is thus both magical and medicinal. It has got divine associations and birth.

Sāyaṇa considers that Sahadevī is the plant addressed in these hymns[1] along with Darbha and Apāmārga. The name Sahadevī does not occur in the hymns. The word *sahamānā* occurs at (4. 17. 2), but it is not a proper name. VSS[2] mentions the various medicinal qualities of this plant. The plant Sahadevī has been mentioned by VSS.[3] It is used as a cure against typhoid, gastric diseases, piles and heart diseases. Darbha plant will be subsequently treated independantly.

### (25) SADAMPUṢPĀ (4. 20).

This is a divine herb. It enables the wearer of its amulet to see through sky, atmosphere and on earth (4. 20. 1). It is the pupil of the Divine Eagle.[4] It has descended on this earth from the Divine Eagle (the heaven) for the benefit of the human beings, like a wearied bride on the comfortable coach (4. 20. 3). It is also the eye of Kaśyapa and of the four-eyed bitch (4. 20. 7). The thousand eyed

[1] See SĀYAṆA's introduction to 4. 17. The hymns are 4. 17, 18, 19.

[2] P. 41.

[3] P. 1110.

[4] Divine Suparṇa is Agni according to BLOOMFIELD, See *JAOS*, XVI. p. 1. GRILL considers him to be the sun. See his translation of 4. 20.

god[1] is invoked to put the amulet of the plant in the right hand of the operator of the magic (4. 20. 4). The plant is addressed as god of thousand eyes (4. 20. 5). It enables to see all creatures (4. 20. 2), Śūdra and Aryan (4. 20. 3), Kimidins (4. 20. 4) and Piśācas (4. 20. 6).

VSS refers to a plant called Sadāpuṣpa.[2] The herb Sadampuṣpā does not occur in the medical treatise.

### (26) Ajaśṛṅgī (4. 37).

It is described as a milky and thorny plant with a front, cooked figure like a ram's horn.[3] With the help of this plant the Atharvans, Kaśyapa, Kaṇva and Agastya killed the Rākṣasas (4. 37. 1). It is the mightiest of the plants and herbs. It has got pointed horns with which it pierces the Apsarasas (4. 37. 6). It drives away the demons with its smell (4. 37. 2), and crushes and overcomes the Piśacas, who devour *avakā* reeds, burn and spread their little light in the waters (4. 37. 10).

### (27) Kuṣṭha (*Sausurca amiculata* or *costus speciosus*).

As has been rightly said by Bloomfield,[4] next to the Soma plant, the Kuṣtha is one of the most valued members of the Vedic flora. Its mother's name is Jivalā (lively) and father's name in Jīvanta (living, 19. 39. 3). It is the best of the plants like a bull among the cattle and tiger among the beasts of prey (19. 39. 4). It was begotten along with Soma thrice by Śambhu Aṅgiras, Ādityas and all gods (19. 39. 5). The plant is a protecting god, coming from the Himavat mountain. It has three names Kuṣtha, Naghamāra (no-death) and Naghāriṣa (no-harm, 19. 39. 1-2). It is a universal remedy against fever. Aśvattha-tree is the residence of the gods in the third heaven from here. There this *amṛta* or the flower of *amṛta* (6. 95. 2) was sighted. There it was born (19. 39. 6; 5. 43; 6. 95. 1). Thus from the celestial Aśvattha-tree, this plant, the *amṛta* itself was born of the Āṅgirasas and gods. It was then brought to the earth. A golden ship with golden tackle moved on the heaven. The golden ship glided down on the peak of the Himavat mountain (5. 4. 4). The paths were golden, so were the oars and the ships (6. 5. 4. 5). On this earth, the nectar was born there. It thus hails from the Himālaya, which is brooding place of the eagle (5. 4. 2). It is thus born of the gods and is a dear friend of Soma (5. 4. 7). It is sprung in the north from the Himavat mountain and is carried to the east for the people. There the excellent varieties of Kuṣṭha were distributed (5. 4. 8). The name of the plant and of its father is 'excellent'

[1] According to Bloomfield p. 402, Agni is meant here.

[2] P. 109 ff. It is identified with Arka tree (*Calotropis gigantia*). It has none of the magical qualities of Sadampuṣpā.

[3] VSS, p. 17.

[4] AV, p. 414.

(*uttama*, 5. 4. 9). It removes consumption, fever, female demons and also cures pain in the head, eye and any ailment in the body. It is thus the universal remedy, divine in its power in curing diseases (5. 4. 10). It cures fever that comes on each third day, which comes without interval and that comes yearly (19. 39. 10). It is also used in a salve to effect love or harmony (6. 102. 3). It was well-known as such, since long; for, formerly Ikṣvāku Kāmya (a son of Kāma), Vasa and Ātsya knew it (19. 39. 9).[1]

Kuṣṭha is a plant of very great usefulness. It was born in the north and was carried to the east, where it had many varieties. It seems it was a divine remedy against all sorts of malarial fevers in the jungles of the east. It is no wonder that the plant was deified and was raised to the position of nectar and brother of Soma.

VSS[2] points out that the plant Kuṣṭha cures all gastric complaints, wounds, cough and leprosy.

### (28) Lākṣā (5. 5, *Cocus lacea*).

Bloomfield remarks that the Atharvan poets signalize with great predilection their knowledge of the power of any substance, which they employ by stating that this knowledge extends to the father, mother and other relatives of the substance.[3] This remark applies very well to the geneology of the healing plant Lākṣā. Its mother is Rātrī (night); its father is Nabhas (cloud); its grand father is Aryaman. The plant is the sister of the gods (5. 5. 1). It is the sister of waters and has wind as soul (5. 5. 7). Its father is the son of a maiden (5. 5. 8). Its name Silācī (*PPP* reads Śilādi 5. 5. 1), Sparaṇī (winning—Whitney) or Arundhatī (5. 5. 5), Jayantī (conquering) and Pratyātiṣṭhantī (firmly founded 5. 5. 3), or Niṣkṛti (relief, 5. 5. 6). It climbs from tree to tree like a lustful woman after a man (5. 5. 3). On the auspicious Plaksa-tree (*ficus infectoria*), or Aśvattha-tree (*ficus religiosa*) or Khadira-tree (*acacia catechu*) or Dhava-tree (*grislea tomentosa*) or Nyagrodha (*ficus indica*) or Parṇa tree (*buleā frondosa*) it grows (5. 5. 5). It has golden colour or sun colour. It is very lovely and handsome. It has got hairy stem (5. 5. 7). It is brown like a goat. With the blood of a brown horse of Yama it is sprinkled (5. 5. 8). It fell down from the blood of the horse and ran to the trees and turned into a winged brook. It cures wounds. It is the support of all men (5. 5. 2). He, who drinks it lives. It cures the wound caused by staff, by an arrow or by fire (5. 5. 4). It goes to the heart and cures it (5. 5. 6).

[1] Except about Ikṣvāku, all other names are differently deciphered. Whitney p. 961, reads Kuṣṭhakāmya, for Kuṣṭha and Kāmya, making it a proper name. Whitney and Bloomfield read Vāyasa and Mātsya for Vā Vasa and Yam Ātsya, which is found in the *padapāṭha*. Obviously both these scholars have gone against the *padapāṭha*. Sāyaṇa takes Kāmya to be the son of Kāma. He takes Yamāsya Vasa, a man Vasa having the mouth like that of Yama. This is also against *padapāṭha*.

[2] P. 298.

[3] Bloomfield, AV p. 419.

Thus Atharvan, the traditional seer of the hymn explains the divine origin, red colour and curing power of the plant lākṣā. It is also called Arundhatī repeatedly.

(29) ARUNDHATĪ (6. 59).

This plant is all-formed, well proportioned, and giving life. With all-gods it comes to the help of the cattle, cows giving milk and not giving milk, giving vigour to them (6. 59. 1) and makes the cow stalls rich in milk and men, free from *yakṣma* (6. 59. 2). It wards off the missile of Rudra discharged against the cattle (6. 59. 3). Sāyaṇa identified this plant with Sahadevī.[2] It is also identified with one by name Jīvalā. VSS[3] does not give any medicinal qualities of this plant. This seems to be another type of Arundhatī plant.

(30) PIPPALI (6. 109).

The Asuras buried this medicinal herb down, but the gods took it up repeatedly (6. 109. 3). From the time of its birth they all agreed in its qualities (6. 109. 2). The gods prepared this remedy for wounds, bruises and all diseases arising out of wind or gas (6. 109. 1-3).

Pippali (*piper longum*) is used against gastric complaints.[4]

(31) CĪPUDRU (6. 128).

This point is used in curing abscess, *balāsa* (cough), flow of blood, neuralgia in the limbs, ears and eyes, pain in the heart, and *yakṣma*. It also cures the boils that grow in the armpit due to the disease called *balāsa* (cough and asthama, 6. 127. 1-3). Sāyaṇa understands the plant to be Palāśa (*butea frondosa*) as intended in this hymn. Kauśika (26. 34) follows Sāyaṇa in this respect. VSS[5] and BP[6] employ this plant against cough, biles and impurity of blood. The plant Cīpudru is not noticed in the Indian medical books. Nor do we find it as a synonym for Palāśa tree.

(32) NITATNĪ (6. 136).

The plant is a goddess, born on the divine earth. It is dug up from the ground to be used for growing hair. The medicine produced from the plant is expected to fix the old hair, grow new ones and make them longer, when they grew up. This all-healing herb is sprinkled on the head to prevent the falling of hair, along with their roots (6. 136. 1-3). This plant cannot be traced in the Indian medical books. The plant Keśavardhinī[7] has been already treated.

[1] P. 914.
[2] For Sahadevī *see* under Apāmarga.
[3] P. 66.
[4] VSS, p. 673.
[5] P. 646.
[6] Bhāvaprakāśa (hereafter referred to as BP) of BHĀVAMISRA, edited by NĀNAL, Poona 1929, p. 160.
[7] Sec. 6.

(33) A PLANT TO GROW HAIR (6. 137).

This plant was dug out of the earth by Jamadagni for his daughter. It was brought from the house of Asita by Vītahavya (6. 137. 1). Sāyaṇa takes Asita to be a sage with dark hair. This plant is employed to make the hair long like reins or arms stretched or reed, on the head. The plant is invoked to fix the root, to draw out the ends and expand the middle of the hair. It also makes the hair black (6. 137. 2-3).

(34) A HERB TO MAKE A MAN IMPOTENT (6. 138).

This is a well-known herb, best of all. It is invoked to make a man impotent and that he should begin putting on woman's head-dress. He should have female organ and hair on his head. His male organ is crushed and the man becomes a eunuch (6. 138. 1-5). The plant is not mentioned in the hymn. The commentator does not mention it. Kauśika (48. 32) gives the magical practice to accompany the recital of this hymn. He does not mention the plant used, but he refers to the fruits of Kakuca tree to be used in the rite.

(35) NYASTIKĀ (6. 139).

This plant is used in a magical rite to arouse passionate love in the mind of a woman. Literally the word Nyastikā means, 'clinging down to the ground'. It is a plant which brings luck. Its hundred branches go up and thirty-three times spread downwards.

It has thousand leaves (6. 139. 1). It is twany in colour. It is lovely to look at. It is invoked to cause affection, kindle love and draw the woman towards the man, who loves her (6. 139. 5). The heart of the woman, along with mouth, is dried up for the sake of the man and is attracted towards him (6. 139. 2).

VSS does not mention this plant. Sāyaṇa[1] refers to the plant as Śaṅkhapuṣpikā. VSS[2] notes down a plant by name Śaṅkhapuṣpā (*Andropogon aciculartum*). The plant has been described as increasing virile power and removing mental diseases. It also removes the hostile influences of ghosts and evil spirits.[3] It is thus possible that the Śaṅkhapuṣpikā is the herb intended here.

(36) A PLANT USED IN A RITE TO SECURE THE LOVE OF A MAN (7. 38).

Sāyaṇa and Kauśika (36. 12) understand the plant to be Sauvarcala by name. This herb is dug out of the ground (7. 38. 1a). Indra was seduced with the help of this herb by an Asura-woman from the gods[4] (7. 138. 2). The face of the plant is turned to Soma, Sūrya and all gods (7. 138. 3). It causes tears in the eyes of the

[1] See his comment on 6. 139. 1.
[2] P. 1018.
[3] Loc. cit.
[4] *Saṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa* XIII. 4 and *Kāthaka Saṃhitā* XIII. 5.

lover. It causes return of the lover, who has gone away and causes joy to him when he comes near the lady of his love (7. 38. 1cd). With the help of the plant the lover is subjected to his beloved and makes her dear to him (7. 38. 2cd). The lover thus absolutely belongs to the lady of his love and cannot even talk with any other woman (7. 36. 4). Even if the lover is beyond the haunts of people or beyond the rivers, this herb brings him as it were bound to the lady, who loves him (7. 38. 5). VSS[1] refers to salt by name Sauvarcala (*sachal salt*). He does not mention a plant of its name. Among its qualities VSS[2] points out that it is fragrant and pleasing to the taste.

(37) Tuṣṭikā (7. 114).

This is used in a charm against a rival woman. *PPP* reads the plant to be Triṣṭikā. The commentator explains it as 'causing burning sensation'. He gives the other name of the plant as Bāṇāparṇī.[3] Kauśika (36. 38) gives the same name. The plant is kept on the bed where the man and her rival are expected to sleep. The plant is invoked to make the woman hateful to the man and cut off the rival woman (7. 114. 1). The plant Tuṣṭikā is rough and poisonous. So the woman would be treated as poisonous by the man and should be avoided by him (7. 114. 2). VSS[4] refers to the plant as Śarapuṅkha (*Tephrosia purpura*) and Bāṇapuṅkhā (cf. Sāyaṇa's suggestion of *Baṇāparṇī*).[5] But none of them can be said to possess any quality for which it is used here in the magical rite.

(38) Gugglu (19. 38).

Sāyaṇa and the Aundha edition of AV reads Gulgulu for Gugglu. It has got fragrant odour, which is medicinal. It is taken out from the river or the ocean. It removes *yakṣma*, curse and injury (19. 38. 1-2). VSS[6] reads Guggulu. It is used against diseases in old age, cough and gastric diseases.

(39) Vrīhi and Yava

These two are used in a rite for curing *yakṣma*. The barley (*yava*) is sown with six or eight yokes. With the barley the complaint in the body of the patient is removed (6. 91. 1). *PPP* in (6. 91. 3cd) invokes waters in addition to the barley to remove the physical complaints of the patient. To a person, who is dangerously suffering from *yakṣma*, rice and barley are given. They are invoked to be propitious to the patient and to make him free from *balāsa* (cough), driving away the *yakṣma* and distress (8. 2. 18). Poison in the food, drinks and milk consumed by the patient is thus removed. Day and night he is guarded against the demons, who intend to

[1] P. 1156.
[2] Loc. cit.
[3] Sāyaṇa, on 7. 114. 1.
[4] P. 1026.
[5] P. 732.
[6] P. 373.

devour him. Thus he should be free from the dangerous disease of *yakṣma* and *balāsa* and enjoy the life for hundred years. The rain and herb should be pleasant to him (8. 2. 19-21). BP[1] gives all details of Yava and Vrīhi and points out that they should be used against cough and blood diseases and in general to increase the strength of the body.

### (40) Baja (8. 6).

*PPP* reads Java. It is used in a magical rite to guard a pregnant woman from demons and diseases. Various demons[2] harass a pregnant woman by causing embryonic diseases. Baja is called upon not to allow to creep them down between the thighs of the pregnant woman (8. 6. 3). From the pudenda (*muṣka*) and buttocks of the pregnant woman, the Asura, who is black, hairy, born with tuft, snouted and the niggard, is caused to be expelled with the help of the herb (8. 6. 6). The brown Baja causes to disappear also the flesh-eating demonic, non-Aryan, who goes on producing sound *kiṣ-kiṣ* like a dog (8. 6. 7). Baja causes to disappear the invisible eunuchs who sleep in dream with the pregnant woman as her father or brother (8. 6. 7). The herb Baja also removes the chances of the miscarriage or the still-birth (8. 6. 9). In the evening round the house of the pregnant woman sometimes the evil spirits, having the noise like donkeys, such as *kuśulas*, *kukṣila*, *kakubha*, *karuma*, *srima*, are chased away by Baja (8. 6. 10). The herb Baja is also called upon to oust the eunuchs, who try to approach the pregnant woman as if she were their wife (8. 6. 16). The brown Baja also removes the Gandharvas, who cause the child die as soon as it is born. To defend herself against attacks by the evil spirits on her body and the embryo, the pregnant woman is asked to carry the two stalks of white and brown Baja under the knot of his garment (8. 6. 20).

Sāyaṇa explains the herb Baja as Sarṣapa (mustard), *Brassica campestris*. VSS[3] notes the word Sarṣapa and points out among other qualities as removing poison, evil beings and skin diseases. However, it never mentions the Sarṣapa as particularly useful against the miscarriage or as connected with the embryonic troubles of a pregnant woman.

### (41) Saktu (7. 45).

This is a medicine against jealousy. It is brought from a distant country from a river, to be used against a person burning like ordinary fire or the fire of conflagration (7. 45. 1-2). Sāyaṇa on 7. 45 points out that the medicine is the herbal remedy called Saktu

[1] Pp. 190-191.

[2] A number of demons or evil beings are mentioned such as *durṇāma*, *alimśa*, *vatsapa*, *palāla*, *anupalāla*, *śarku*, *koka*, *malmcula*, *palijaka*, *āśreṣa*, *vavrivāsas* (wrapped up), *ukṣagrīva* (bear-necked) *pramīlana* (winking one). See 8. 6. 1-2.

[3] P. 1108.

mixture. VSS[1] points out that Saktu is a mixture of powders of rice, barley and fried grains (lājā).

### (42) Mekhalā (6. 133).

Mekhalā is a girdle made of *muñja* grass. It is used in the rite of sorcery as a waist-band.[2] The god (*deva*) bound this girdle for carrying the rite to successful end (6. 133. 1). It is a weapon of the sages. It partook of the first vow. It kills the heroes (6. 133. 2). Mekhalā is the daughter of Faith, born of Penance. She is the sister of the seers who produced all beings. The girdle is invoked to grant thought, wisdom, penance, Indra's power and long life (6. 133. 4-5).

### (43) Parṇa amulet (3. 5).

The amulet of Parṇa tree, also called Palāśa tree is tied for securing lustre, strength, life, wealth and prosperity.[3] The amulet of Parṇa tree contains vigour of the gods and milk of the herb (3. 8. 1c). The amulet is dear to the gods, who kept it concealed in the trees (3. 5. 3ab). It has the formidable lustre of Soma. It is given by Indra and is controlled by Varuṇa (3. 5. 4). It is tied on for securing splendour (3. 5. 1d), for securing wealth, domain, and superiority in the sphere of the kingdom (3. 5. 2), for long life (3. 5. 3d), of hundred autumns (3. 5. 4d) and for becoming superior in patronage and knowledge (3. 5. 5). The amulet is invoked to make submissive the fishermen, the chariotmakers, the smiths, all people round about, the kings, the makers of the kings such as ministers, the *Sūtās*[4] and the *grāmaṇis*, the leaders of the village (3. 5. 7). The Parṇa is an armour for protecting the body. It is a hero. It is tied on with the lustre of the sun (3. 5. 8). VSS[5] points out that Palāśa, the other name of Parṇa, *butia frondosa*, is one of the very important trees. Its seeds remove skin diseases. However medicinally this amulet has not that value which it is expected to have it magically.

RV (4. 26-27) refers to the origin of Parṇa. A divine archer, who was guarding the Soma shoots shot at the eagle that attempted to rob Soma. The eagle lost its feather, which fell down on the ground turning itself into a Parṇa tree.[6] All this information is intended to show that the Parṇa tree is derived from the heaven and is connected with Soma. This brings sanctity to the tree and its consequent use in the magical amulet.[7]

[1] P. 1081.

[2] Sāyaṇa's introduction to 6. 133 and Kauśika 47. 14-15.

[3] Sāyaṇa's introduction to 3. 5.

[4] Sūtas are born of Kṣatriya from a Brāhmaṇa woman. Sāyaṇa on 3. 5. 7, or they mean a class of the charioteers. But the word Sūtas may mean the bards, who used to sing glories of the kings at their courts.

[5] P. 646. [6] *JAOS* Vol. XVI, 20, 24. [7] Bloomfield, p. 331.

### (44) SRAKTYA AMULET

This amulet is used to counteract witchcraft. The hymn (2. 11) points out that the amulet of Sraktya tree is *kṛtyā* (witchcraft) to counteract other witchcraft. It is a missile and a weapon (2. 11. 1). It is a *pratisara*, a charm to revert the witchcrafts of others (2. 11. 2). The amulet is a wise patron, the protection of the body and bestower of splendour (2. 11. 4). It is bright, shining and luminous (2. 11. 5). It is invoked to conjure against him who hates the wearer and whom he hates (2. 11. 3). It enables the wearer of the amulet to be superior to all, crossing all equals (2. 11. 1). In the same vain the amulet of Sraktya tree is glorified at 8. 5. With this amulet Indra killed Vṛtra. He defeated the Asuras and conquered the heaven and earth and four quarters (8. 5. 3). The amulet is heroic and is tied on a hero. It is very powerful. It kills rivals and overpowers all witchcrafts, whether they may be of the Āṅgirasas or Asuras or self-made or made by others (8. 5. 2, 9). Agni, Soma, Bṛhaspati, Savitṛ and Indra testify to this effect. All gods, who are controlled by the witchcraft-maker, with the help of the *pratisara* drive off the *kṛtyās* (8. 5. 5). The amulet is an all-round defence (8. 5. 8). The Sraktya is the best of the herb and the wearer of the amulet of this tree becomes like a bull or a tiger or a lion. Indra and other gods tie the amulet on him for defence. He is not injured by the Gandharvas nor by the Apsarasas nor by the mortals (8. 5. 10-13). The Seer Kaśyapa created and inspired the amulet. Indra bore it on his arm like a human being. It is a defence of the gods (8. 5. 14). If any one attempts to smite the wearer of the amulet by means of witchcraft or consecrations or sacrifices, the amulet assumes the power of the hundred-jointed thunderbolt (8. 5. 15). Indra deposits manliness in this amulet and gods enter in it for securing long life of hundred years for the wearer (8. 5. 21). It is a divine amulet and yields miraculous effect of granting long life, protection and vigour (8. 5. 20).

Sāyaṇa[1] designates the amulet of Sraktya or Srāktya as a Tilaka tree. WEBER[2] derives the word Srāktya, from Sraktya, a corner and calls it many sided amulet, hence he thinks it to be made of polished jewel or crystal. However there is the evidence of Sāyaṇa and Kauśika (39. 1) to show that it is one of the holy trees.

### (45) DARBHA (19. 28-30, 32, 33).

Darbha is a herb of hundred joints and of thousand leaves, formidable and difficult to be shaken from its place (19. 32. 1). It grows on the earth. Its tuft is in the heaven (19. 32. 3). Darbha is spread over the three heavens and the three earths (19. 32. 4). As

[1] Sāyaṇa's introduction to 2. 11. and BLOOMFIELD *JAOS* xiii, p. cxxxii.
[2] *Indischen Studien* xiii. 163.

soon as it was born, Darbha made the earth firm and supported the atmosphere and heaven (19. 32. 9). It became the foremost of the plants (19. 32. 10). It is worth thousands. It is rich in milk. It contains the fire of waters and the essence of plants. It is a divine amulet (19. 33. 1). It is unstirred, yet stirring others (19. 33. 2). It goes across the earth with vehemence. It occupies a charming place on the sacrificial altar at the time of sacrifice. The sages bear Darbha as the purifier (*pavitra*, 19. 33. 2). Darbha is the sharp King of mighty power, killing demons. It belongs to all men. It is the vigour and formidable strength of the gods (19. 33. 4). Darbha is born of gods (19. 32. 7). When the ocean roared and Parjanya with Vidyut thundered, from that (Parjanya) a golden drop was born. From that Darbha was born (19. 30. 5). Darbha is a plant of many roots that go down to the sea and arise out of the earth (6. 43. 2).

The amulet of Darbha is tied to destroy the rivals and haters. It is invoked to burn against, split, cut off, pierce, obstruct, grind, crush and kill the rivals and haters (19. 28-29). It is used to secure long life and death only in old age (19. 30. 1). It is called the defence of gods and Indra. It is Brahmaṇaspati. It has hundred defences which protect kingdom. It increases the dominion and protects the body (19. 30. 3-4). It affords excellent protection. None can dare to touch his hair or give blows on his chest, when he puts on the amulet of Darbha of uncut leaves (19. 32. 2). The amulet overpowers the rivals, hostile plotters and enemies. It brings about friendship with many. It enables the wearer to win men to his side. It makes the wearer dear to Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas, to Śūdra and Ārya and to whomsoever one desires (19. 32. 8). Darbha amulet is also employed to remove the wrath or fury of men, one's own or of stranger. Darbha is called one which removes and appeases the fury (6. 43. 1).

(46) Śatavāra amulet

The amulet of Śatavāra tree is a golden bull (19. 36. 5ab). It generates hundred heroes (19. 36. 4ab). With its two horns[1] it thrusts away the demons, with its roots the female witchcraft makers and with its middle, Yakṣma which is small and great and noisy. All these are destroyed by this amulet (19. 36. 2, 4). It expels all demons by means of its splendour. It removes the disease called *durṇāma*, a skin disease[2] and hundreds of the Gandharvas and Apsarasas (19. 36. 6).

Śatavāra has been explained by Sāyaṇā as a herb which cures hundred diseases. It is tied on the arm of a person.[3]

[1] The leaf of the tree seems to be divided at its apex, looking like the horns of a bull.

[2] Sāyaṇa, on 19. 36. 1.

[3] Sāyaṇa, *loc. cit.*

VSS[1] notes a herb called Śatāvarī (*Asparagus Sarementosus*). It[2] is described as a greatly medicinal herb, yielding virile power and curing the disturbances in the three humours of body.

### (47) Astṛta amulet (19. 46).

Prajāpati tied this amulet for performing heroic deeds (19. 46. 1ab). It is invoked to protect the wearer of the amulet ceaselessly so that neither the Paṇis nor the sorceres can ever harm the wearer (19. 46. 2). In this amulet, there are hundred and one heroic deeds. In it are a thousand breaths. It is a tiger attacking the rivals and enemies. It is never conquered by any one (19. 46. 5). It is besmeared in ghee, rich in milk, having thousand vital breaths, hundred-fold strength, imparting vigour, blissful, delightful and rich in food and milk (19. 46. 6).

The amulet is thus tied on for securing long life and protection from rivals, haters and enemies.

### (48) Arka (6. 72).

The Arka amulet is invoked to make the generative organ fit for enjoyment, just as a black snake spreads itself at pleasure, making wonderful forms by the magic of the Asuras (6. 72. 1). It makes the member big like that of *parasvat* (a kind of deer according to Sāyaṇa), elephant, ass or horse (6. 72. 2-3). It is noteworthy that Kāmasūtra (2-1) mentions only these types of male generative organs.

Arka is according to Whitney a fine sort of silky flax prepared from the barks of the young shoots.[3]

VSS[4] describes Arka (*Calotropis gigantea*) as making the body more lustrous. Arka occurs as a synonym of Nimba tree (*Melia azadirachla*),[5] which has the quality of pacifying the agitation in the mind. These qualities of Arka or Nimba do not agree with the purpose of the Arka amulet. It rather agrees with the qualities of Palāṇḍu (onion, *Allium cepa*) which is definitely described as increasing the virile power of a man and making him more strong.[6] Palāṇḍu occurs as a synonym of Nimba also.[7]

### (49) Parihasta amulet (6. 81).

This is a bangle shaped amulet tied on a woman for securing the conception of a male child. It is put on both the hands to drive away the demons and to secure wealth (6. 81. 1). The amulet is invoked to hold apart the womb for the conception of a male child. Āditi tied this amulet for securing the birth of a son. Tvaṣṭṛ tied it on her, saying that she may give birth to a son (6. 81. 2-3).

[1] P. 1023.
[2] *Loc. cit.*
[3] Whitney, p. 335.
[4] VSS, p. 67.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 609.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 646.
[7] RN, 13.

Parihasta is the amulet which encircles the hand (wrist).

(50) UTTĀNAPARṆĀ (3. 18).

The plant is used against a rival wife. Sāyaṇa calls it Paṭhā. Kauśika (36. 38) calls it Baṇāparṇī. This hymn also occurs at the RV X. 145.

(51) AŚVATTHA

The tree named Aśvattha, grown on Khadira tree is like a male born of male. This has got the quality of expelling the enemy, accompanied by the help of Indra, Mitra and Varuṇa (3. 6. 1-2). As Aśvattha breaks the trunk of the Khadira tree and grows ascending all forest tree and is overpowering like a bull, it has been called upon to break down, overpower and outshine the enemies (3. 6. 3-6). With the help of a branch of this tree the enemy is shattered and driven away (3. 6. 8). In the battle rite, Aśvattha is invoked along with Khadira to devour the enemy speedily and break them down like hemp. The enemy is consequently destroyed by means of the weapons (8. 8. 2).[1] The production of fire by the churning of Aśvattha and Śamī sticks is the basis for a rite for securing the birth of male child.[2] Aśvattha mounts on Śamī. This is the process for securing the birth of a male child (6. 11. 1). Aśvattha is the seat of the gods in the third heaven (6. 95. 1). Aśvattha (*Ficus religiosa*) is a sacred tree. It is in heaven. Agni resided in this tree for one year, according to TB.[3]

VSS[4] notes that the Aśvattha contains among other medicinal qualities, the quality of curing embryonic diseases. This might be the reason for its association in the *puṁsavana* rite.

(52) AUDUMBARA (19. 31).

The amulet of Udumbara is tied on for securing abundance in cattle, food, land, wealth and men. Savitṛ is called upon to bring abundance in cattle with an amulet of Udumbara (19. 31. 1). The amulet is quickened by Indra. It is a heavenly amulet, killing rivals and winning riches (19. 31. 7-8). Udumbara in the beginning was born with prosperity (19. 31. 9). This amulet with Sarasvatī and Sinivālī is invoked to grant riches and food (19. 31. 10). This amulet is the lord of the amulets (19. 31. 10). The amulet is the leader of the village (*grāmaṇī*). It is sprinkled with splendour (19. 31. 12). The amulet is a house-older, sacrificing in the house. It is invoked to make the wearer of the amulet, a leader of the village and a household-sacrificer (19. 31. 13). The amulet is a hero and is tied on for becoming a hero (19. 31. 14).

1 Kauśika for the magical use of Aśvattha and Khadira 16. 9-20.

2 1. 1. 3. 11 and 1. 1. 3. 9.

3 *Loc. cit.*

4 P. 88.

There is nothing in the medicinal qualities of Aśvattha, which would bring about the effects of this amulet.

### (53) JAṄGIḌA

It is amulet made from Jaṅgiḍa tree. It is a protective amulet, yielding protection from witchcrafts, which are thirty-five and witch-craft-makers who are hundred (19. 34. 4) and who are both gods and men (19. 35. 5). It throws away hostile powers of the enemies. It cures Viskandha[1] and Saṁskandha diseases (19. 34. 5). It also cures breaking disease, tearing disease, the *balāsa*, pain in the back and fever which comes in every autumn (19. 34. 10). It is thus all healing amulet (19. 35. 5). It gives all round protection from heaven, earth, atmosphere, plants, past, future and all directions (19. 35. 4).

The amulet is tied in a hempen cord and put on the body (2. 4. 5).

The amulet is given by the gods and confers bliss on the wearer (2. 4. 4).

The Jaṅgiḍa grows on the earth. The gods beget it. The Brāhmaṇas of the old times knew the plant and amulet by the name Aṅgiras[2] (19. 34. 6). Neither old nor new plants surpass it in its qualities as the fierce destroyer of the diseases and hostile witchcrafts and as conferring bliss and happiness (19. 34. 7).

### (54) ABHĪVARTA (1. 29)[3]

This amulet is tied on the body for overcoming and overriding the enemy. It kills rivals and thus leads the wearer to royalty (1. 29. 4). The name of the amulet is derived from its quality to surpass the enemy or rivals. Kauśika (16. 29) and Sāyaṇa points out that the amulet is to be made of the rim of a chariot wheel.

### (55) DAŚAVṚKṢA (2. 9).

An amulet of ten holy trees such as *palāśa*, *udumbara*, *jambu*, *kāmpāla*, etc., is made and is coated with lac of these trees.[4] It is used against diseases caused by *piśācas* and *grāhī*, who catch the joints of a person. As a result of this amulet, found by the gods the patient comes to the world of the living, amongst his relations and becomes a lucky man. For he possesses the hundred healers, worth a thousand plants (2. 9. 1-3). The gods arranged the trees (ten in number), while the Brāhmaṇas contribute to the practical knowledge of the plants, which are endowed with healing property (2. 9. 4).[5]

[1] Sāyaṇa explains this term as a disease caused by demons obstructing motion. See his comment on 1. 16. 3. Also see TS 7. 3. 11. 1.

[2] The association of Aṅgiras with the benevolent amulet is noteworthy.

[3] Four out of six verses of this hymn are found at RV X. 174.

[4] Kauśika, 27. 5. 6.

[5] BLOOMFIELD, AV p. 292.

VSS[1] notes a medicinal group of the roots of the ten trees called *daśamūla*. It cures cough, headache and disturbance in three humours of the body.

(56) WAR-DRUM MADE UP OF FOREST TREE (5. 20-21).

All musical instruments such as drum and others, which are used in war are washed and dipped in a mixture of *tagara* (powder of *Tabernacmontaua coronaria*) and *uśīra* (root of *Andropogon muricatus*). The drum has its vehemance like Indra, in overpowering the enemies (5. 20. 2). It terrifies the enemy in the fight with deadly weapon. Hearing its voice, even a sleeping woman runs to her son seizing his hand (5. 20. 5). The sound of the war-drum fills the heaven and earth (5. 20. 7). The drum-beaters go ahead in the battle. They are followed by the bold army spreading news and sounding through many villages (5. 20. 9-10). The drum is protected by Indra and is an unconquerable leader (5. 20. 11).

The skin of cow or antelope is used in making a drum. With such a drum the gods scared away the enemies (5. 21. 7).

The bow strings twang and the drums resound in the direction where the defeated armies of the enemies go in battle array (5. 21. 9).

(57) VARAṆA (10. 3, 6. 85).

The amulet of Varaṇa is a mighty bull killing rivals and enemies. The amulet becomes the vanguard in the front. With the help of this amulet the gods warded off the attack of the Asuras day after day (10. 2. 1-2). The Varaṇa amulet, the representative of the kingly divine tree is put on the chest (10. 3. 11). The amulet has thousand eyes and golden colour and is a universal cure (10. 3. 3). The word Varaṇa means 'warding off' and the amulet Varaṇa wards off spells, human dangers, diseases, evil dreams, ominous sneezing, evil cry of a bird, Arāti, Nirṛti, sorcery and sins committed by the parents, brother and sister and oneself (10. 3. 4-8). It enables the wearer to live long for hundred years, breaking down the rivals that were formerly born and latter born (10. 3. 12-25). This divine herb Varaṇa removes *yakṣma* (6. 85. 1).

VSS[2] mentions Varaṇa and Varuṇa (*capparis triforliata*) trees. They remove gastric complaints and blood diseases.

(58) FĀLA (10. 6).

This is an amulet of the shape of a ploughshare. It is made from Khadira tree, which is very strong (10. 6. 6). It affords protection and becomes an armour for the wearer (10. 6. 2). The amulet has a golden wreath. It bestows faith, sacrifice and might (10. 6. 4). It yields hundredfold reward of sacrifices (10. 6. 34).

[1] P. 537.    [2] P. 940.

Like a guest it remains in the house, where it is treated with ghee, wine, honey and every kind of food. The amulet going to the gods, brings down food day after day (10. 6. 5), cows, goats, sheep and progeny (10. 6. 23), rice and barley (10. 6. 24), strength, lustre, fortune and fame (10. 6. 27). It is an amulet born of the gods. It is the sap milked from the three worlds (10. 6. 31). On this amulet the gods, Fathers and men live (10. 6. 32). Bṛhaspati tied on himself this amulet for strength. This amulet was tied on by Agni, Indra, Soma and Sūrya (10. 6. 6-12). Candramas putting on this amulet conquered the golden cities of Asuras and Dānavas (10. 6. 10). Aśvins bearing this amulet guard the whole agricultural land (10. 6. 12). Bṛhaspati tied the amulet swift Vāta. On account of putting on this amulet, the waters of the rivers run unexhausted and yield more and more nectar (10. 6. 14). Wearing this amulet, the gods conquered all worlds in battle (10. 6. 16). This amulet was created by Prajāpati (10. 6. 19). The Atharvans tied this on the Āṅgirasas who shattered the cities of the Asuras (10. 6. 20). This amulet of Khadira tree is very helpful owing to the divine origin and resourcefulness.

### (59) Amulet of gold

The descendants of Dakṣa bound this amulet of gold on Śatānīka,[1] securing for him the life hundred years, splendour and strength (1. 35. 1). The golden amulet is the first born force of the gods. No demon, nor *piśācas* can overcome it. It contains brilliancy, strength of waters and heroic deeds of the plants (1. 35. 2-4).

Gold, the immortal (*amṛta*) was born out of fire. It maintains itself over the mortals (19. 26. 1).

### (60) Triple amulet

The amulet made of three metals (gold, silver and copper or iron) is used for protection all around (5. 28. 1; 19. 27. 1). As three metals are used in making this amulet, all triple things such as three heavens, three earths, three atmospheres, three *stomas*, three waters, three oceans, three bright ones, three summits, three Mātariśvans, and three suns are called upon to 'protect the wearer of the amulet (19. 27. 3-4). With the triple amulets, the waters guard the treasure of the gods and Indra found out on the roads travelled by gods (19. 27. 9).

On wearing the triple amulet of god, silver and iron Ādityas sprinkle wealth, Agni increases him with prosperity and Indra unites him with heroism (5. 28. 1). The earth protects the yellow (golden) ingredient of the triple amulet; Agni fills up the iron part of the amulet and the white one (silver) in accordance with the plants, bestows skill on the wearer of the amulet (5. 28. 5). The amulet is

[1] AB 8. 21. *Somaśuṣmā Vājaratnāyana* sprinkled the *aindramahābhiṣeka* on Śatanīka.

thrice born. One was dearest to Agni; one fell off when Soma was injured and one is called the seed of the waters (5. 28. 6). The wearer of this amulet secures triple life time of Jamadgni, Kaśyapa and the triple sight of the immortals (5. 28. 7). When the three eagles went with the triple amulet becoming mighty ones, to the single syllable (om), they brought back death along with immortal (*amṛta*) removing all difficulties (5. 28. 8).

The triple amulet gives long life and protection all round.

### (61) Śaṅkha (*amulet of pearl or its shell*)

The amulet of pearl-shell is born of the wind of the atmosphere, out of lightning and from gold (4. 10. 1). It is born on the top of the bright space and from the ocean (4. 10. 2). It is born in the heaven, in the ocean and brought here from the river (4. 10. 4). It is also born of Vṛtra (the cloud) making the day (4. 10. 5). It is one of the *hiraṇyas* (gold). It is born out of Soma. It is conspicuous on the chariot and bright on the quiver (4. 10. 6). The pearl is the bone of the gods, which goes within the waters possessing soul (4. 10. 7). It is put on for securing long life of hundred years and overpowering diseases and misery. It affords protection from the missiles of gods and Asuras (4. 10. 5).

Saṅkha is the mother of pearls. The amulet described as bright one must be pearl produced in shell and developed in the water of the ocean.[1]

### (62) Sīsa (*or amulet of lead*)

The amulet of lead is blessed by Varuṇa, favoured by Agni and bestowed on by Indra. The amulet smites Viṣkandhā, Atrins (devourers) and the host of the *piśācas*. It affords protection against danger to the life of a cow or horse or man in the family of the person, who wears this amulet (1. 16).

Kauśika (8. 18) explains Sīsa as lead or river-lead, iron-filing or the head of a lizard. Bloomfield[2] considers the Sīsa as river-lead to be the foam of river. Sīsa is used in a magical rite to remove *yakṣma*, caused by the flesh-eating fire from cattle and men (12. 2. 1).

### (63) Āñjana, *ointment from Trikākuda mountain* (4. 9).

The ointment is brought from the three-peaked mountain or from the Himavat mountain. Its father is Trikākuda the highest of the mountains. It is called by both the auspicious names of Trikākuda or Yāmuna (4. 9. 8-10). It is given by all gods, as an enclosure for long life (4. 9. 1). It secures protection of the wearer and brings about destruction of *yātus*. It is a remedy against jaundice and *yakṣma* by creeping it over the limbs after limb, joint after

[1] Whitney, AV. p. 161.
[2] *JAOS* Vol. XV, p. 157.

joints (4. 9. 3-4) and Jāyānya and Visalpaka (19. 44. 2). It has three slaves, viz., fever, *balāsa* (cough) and snake (4. 9. 8).

In marriage rite ointment is put in the eyes of each other by husband and wife so that their eyes become like honey, anointed with ointment and their heart and mind become one (7. 36. 1).

The amulet contains fourfold heroic powers (19. 45. 3). It is used in fourfold ways. It is used as ointment and as an amulet is used while bathing and drinking (19. 45. 5).

## (64) Yakṣma

By means of charms various diseases are expelled from the body. In general there is much dread of Yakṣma or consumption. Headache, pain in the head, pain in the ears, flow of blood,[1] all diseases in the head, the pain in *kaṅkhūṣa*,[2] *visalpaka* (neuralgia), disease from the mouth, disease that makes a man blind or deaf, pain in the limbs, fever in the limbs, fever that comes in every autumn, disease that creeps through thighs and enters the groins, jaundice, *apvā* (diarrhoea) that arises from the belly, the cause of Yakṣma within the body, *balāsa* turning into a sickening urine, the poison of Yakṣma in belly, lungs, mouth and heart, opening of bladder, rumbling in the bowels, the pain that splits up the crown of the head, the pain piercing the sides, along the ribs, in the belly, intestines, in rectum, sucking the marrow, splitting the joints, disease that paralyses the limbs, abscess, inflammation of the eyes and the disease in feet, knee, thigh, bottom, spine, neck—these are the general symptoms of the disease called Yakṣma. When it is cured the bones of the skull become firm and also the beat of the heart (9. 8).

Lightning and rain are considered as the cause of fever, headache and cough, which symptoms are generally spoken as that of Yakṣma. Yakṣma appearing as concealing in each limb of the body, burning and catching the joints of a person is paid homage with oblation. Offering is also made to the hooks and crooks of Yakṣma by means of which he catches the limbs of a person (1. 12. 2). Yakṣma is prayed to free man from cough, pain in joint and that the fever arising out of derangement of cough, wind and bile should go to the forest trees and mountains (1. 12. 3).[3]

[1] Bloomfield renders *vilohita* as flow of blood, Whitney suggests anaemia. See Bloomfield, p. 45 and Whitney, p. 549.

[2] A word of unknown meaning. None of the translators explain this word.

[3] See Sāyaṇa's introduction to 1. 12. Weber, *Indischen Studien* IV, 405, considers this to be a charm against perpetual fever or fever of a child. Ludwig, *Der Ṛgveda* III 343 uses this against inflammation. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 390 uses it against wound and wound fever. *Anukramaṇī* employs the hymn against Yakṣma.

(65) JĀYĀNYA (7. 76. 3-5).

This is also another variety of Rājayakṣma. It is explained as arising out of excessive sexual intercourse with the wife.[1] This disease crushes the chest bone and sinks deep down in the flesh and settles down in the top of the head. The Yakṣma designated as Jāyānya is like a bird flying from place to place in the body. It is of two types *akṣita* and *sukṣata*,[2] that which does not remain in the body for a long time and that which causes bruise. The poet Atharvan knows the origin of the Jāyānya and wonders how can it stay in the house of the patient where the Ātharvaṇa priests offer oblations (7. 76. 5). Sāyaṇa[3] adds that an amulet of a string of a lute is to be tied to cure this Yakṣma.

(66) BALĀSA (6. 14).

Balāsa is phlegm catarrh due to cough and asthma. Balāsa is seen in various aspects such as dissolution of bones and joints, heart disease and that residing in limbs and joints (6. 14. 1). Balāsa is addressed to go or fly far away from the patient (6. 14. 3).

(67) KĀSA (*cough*, 6. 105).

Kāsa is addressed to fly away from the patient beyond thought in this mind, beyond earth and ocean (6. 105. 1-3).

(68) TAKMAN

The word does not occur outside the AV. It means fever. Its birth place is Agni, entering and burning the waters (1. 25. 1). BLOOMFIELD[4] understands that the entering of fire in waters is a reference to the escape of Agni in waters. Agni comes out of lightning and which in turn enters in the waters on the earth. This connects Takman with lightning, which is conceived as the cause of fever and which is associated with rainy season. Sāyaṇa on 1. 25 supposes that gastric fire is the cause of fever. Takman is prayed to spare the patient. Fever is the god of the yellow colour, by name *rhūḍu*,[5] seen in the form of flame, heat or scorching blaze due to its birth from licking the chips of the wood (1. 25. 2). Homage is paid to fever which makes all forms yellow and who is ruddy, brown and woody (6. 20. 3). Takman is the son of king Varuṇa (1. 25. 3). Homage is paid to the fever arising out of cold, and that which is

[1] Sāyaṇa on 7. 76. 3 and also TS 2. 3. 5. 2.

[2] Sāyaṇa reads *sukṣita* for *sukṣata* in the *Aundha* edn. BLOOMFIELD (p. 18) understands *jāyānya* as tumours and explains these two terms as 'not caused by cutting', and 'sharply cut' WHITNEY does not agree with him. See WHITNEY p. 442. But Sāyaṇa's interpretation of *jāyānya* and these two terms appear convincing. I have accepted *sukṣata* as the reading following BLOOMFIELD and WHITNEY.

[3] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 7. 76. 5.

[4] Cf. p. 271.

[5] *PPP* reads *hudu*. Sāyaṇa reads *rudhu* and explains as 'ascending'. Yellow colour is seen on the skin of a person suffering from continuous fever.

deliriously hot and that which comes on the next day, two successive days and that returns on the third day (1. 25. 4) and also that which comes on third day, constantly, in autumn and in hot and rainy seasons (5. 22. 13). The heat in fever causes delirium, when the patient speaks like a mad man. Takman is like a weapon and is prayed to go elsewhere (6. 20. 1). Takman arising out of cold seems to be much dreaded. It is described as hot, stirring, pushing and bold one. It does not allow any desire to be fulfilled owing to its continuous presence in the body. It attacks a person every other day or on both days. It is invoked to go to a frog and spare the patient (7. 116. 1-2).

Agni, Soma, pressing stone, Varuṇa, sacrificial altar, sacred grass *barhis* and *samidhs* are invoked to drive away Takman (5. 22. 1). Takman makes a man sallow and inflames him like scorching fire. Takman is spotted and ruddy like sprinkling of water on the ground (2. 20. 2-3). Salutation is offered to Takman, who has admittedly great capacity to torture the patient. The plant Kuṣṭha is of unfailing potency to cure it.[1] Takman is called the champion of Śakambhara.[2] It is asked to go to the country of Mahavṛṣas, which is its home. Its birth-place is also designated to be the Mūjavat mountain and the country of the Bālhikas. It is asked to go to a Śūdrā woman (5. 22. 4-7) or to a lecherous Śūdrā female. It also should go to the country of the Gandhāris, the Mūjavats, the Aṅgas and the Magadhas or any country which does not belong to the Aryans (5. 22. 14).[3]

Fever, which has terrible missiles causes heat, cold, trembling and cough (5. 22. 10). It is appealed not to associate itself with *balāsa* (phlegm), cough and spasm (5. 22. 11). Its brother is *balāsa* and sister is cough. Its cousin is *pāman*.[4] Along with the whole family, Takman is prayed to go to the foreign people (5. 22. 12).

Takman is thus the fever occuring sometimes seasonally, caused by cold and making men yellow, spotted, reddish and accompanied by *balāsa* (phlegm), cough and pāman and sometimes occuring continuously, making it a sure sign of consumption or Yakṣma. It is repeatedly prayed to go to the foreign (non-Aryan) countries and to harass them with all its malignant effects and spare the poor patient in the land of the Āryans.

1 BLOOMFIELD, p. 445.

2 BLOOMFIELD explains the term as a champion carrier of excrement or the chief of diarrhoea producing diseases. See p. 445-446.

3 Fever is asked to go to those countries where there does not seem to be much association with the Aryan culture.

4 CARAKA describes it as small tubercles in great numbers, of a dark colour with bloody discharge with burning and itching sensation. Cf. WISE, *Hindu system of medicine* 261.

### (69) Hṛdyota and Harimā (1. 22).

Harimā is jaundice. Hṛdyota is heart-disease. The body of a person becomes all yellow. The yellowness, as a cure against the disease is asked to the sun, parrots, thrushes, yellow wag-tails and to the cows, whose divinity is Rohiṇi and are themselves red (1. 22. 1-4).

### (70) Apacits

The Apacits or Gaṇḍamālās are called Manyā also. The difference between Apacits and Manyā seems to be that the tumours of Manyā are hard and large, while those of Apacits are soft and can be more easily opened.[1] The number of the Manyās are fifty-five, seventy-seven or ninety-nine, gathering upon the nape of the neck. They are all asked to go away (6. 25. 1-3).[2] The Apacits are of different colours. Some are spotted or white, while others are black or red. The red ones are twice that of the black ones (6. 85. 2). Apacit is a daughter of the black one (6. 83. 3a). Black (*piśācī*) is the mother of the red Apacit (7. 74. 1). Apacit, the daughter of the black, grows producing others. So they are addressed to fly away like an eagle from the nest and that they should be barren and not multiply themselves. The sun and the moon are called upon to make a remedy against them. The boils and swelling caused by them are asked to fly away, as their names have been taken by the magic priest (6. 83. 3). An oblation is offered to them with devoted mind and they are invoked to partake of it (6. 83. 4). They are prayed not to kill the heroes (6. 83. 2d). Not only by means of taking their and their mother's name (7. 74. 1a) and by offering oblation to them, are they cured, but they are also pierced with all force, by means of an arrow charmed with the spells of divine sage Atharvan[3] (7. 74. 1). The first, middle one and lowest of them are thus pierced by means of an arrow (7. 74. 2). Kauśika (30. 14-16) mentions the leaves of *paraśu* tree to be used in a remedy against Apacits. The Apacits are sometimes on the neck or along the sides or on the perineum (rectum as Sāyaṇa explains, 7. 76. 2). They are dry before ripening and wet after being ripe (7. 76. 1d). These sores of Apacits are invoked to fall off easily and become non-existent (7. 76).

### (71) Jalāṣa (6. 57).

Jalāṣa or urine of a cow is a remedy against wounds caused by arrow having one shaft and hundred tips. This is the remedy of

[1] Bloomfield, p. 473.

[2] Whitney, p. 298, calls them as those that cause pain in neck and shoulder. Sāyaṇa on 6. 25. 1 remarks that Manyās, are the *dhamanīs*, numbering 55, 77 or 99, which are on the neck and are called Gaṇḍamālās. Bloomfield calls them 'scrofulous sores upon neck and shoulders.' See p. 19.

[3] Sāyaṇa (7. 74. 1) explains *muner devasya* as either referring to the arrow charged by the spells of Atharvan or by an arrow made from the root of a tree.

Rudra, which is very formidable. The Jalāsa is poured or sprinkled on the wound (6. 57. 1-2). Sāyaṇa[1] however explains Jalāsa first as water and subsequently as the foam on the urine of a cow.

### (72) Viṣāṇikā (6. 44).

It is a self-shed horn of a cow.[2] It is the urine of Rudra and the navel of the immortal. Viṣāṇikā is its name. It has arisen from the root of the Fathers. It removes diseases arising from wind in the body or the flow of blood from the body[3] (6. 44. 3). It has hundred or thousand remedies. It is the most excellent remedy against flux or wind. It effaces diseases (6. 44. 2).

### (73) Viṣāṇa (3. 7).

The horn on the head of a quickly running antelope is a remedy against *kṣetriya*, the heriditary disease. The horn is addressed to remove the *kṣetriya* that is rooted in the heart (3. 7. 1-2).

### (74) Kṛmi

There are various types of Krimis, worms. The worms creep about the eye or nostrils or in the midst of the teeth (5. 23. 3). They are of like forms or of various forms. Some are red or black, or brown eared (5. 23. 4). Some are like vultures or cuckoo. Some have white side, or being dark, have white arms (5. 23. 5). Some have four eyes (2. 32. 2). They have also different names as *yevaṣas*, *kaṣkaṣas*, *ejatka*, *sipavitnuka*, *nadanimat*, *kurūru*, *algaṇḍu*, *śaluna*, *avaskava* and *vyadhavara* (5. 23. 7-8; 2. 31. 2-4). The worms reside in mountains, in woods, in herbs, in cattle, in waters and in human bodies (2. 31. 5). Soma have two horns with which they attack. They also contain a place in the body which is full of poison, which they inject in the body of others (2. 32. 6). The worms have a king and also chief. They have brothers, sisters and mothers and also neighbourhood of worms (2. 32. 4-5). They are visible or invisible (2. 31. 2). Like Atri, Jamadgni and Agastya, the seer Kaṇva aspires to kill them with his spell (5. 23. 10).

### (75) Serpents and poisons

The poison is in fire, in the sun, in the earth and in the plants (10. 4. 22). The poison is dug out or is inherent (5. 13. 1). There is also *kāndā* poison and *kanaknaka* (10. 4. 22). There is a mountain of poisonous plants (5. 6. 8). The poison is also in serpents. They spring from fire or plants or water or lightning. A great respect is shown to the brood of the serpents (10. 4. 23). The serpents have

[1] See his comment on 6. 57. 2. [2] Kauśika 31. 6.

[3] This is what Bloomfield understands from the term *vātikṛta*. See p. 10. Sāyaṇa understands by the expression the diseases of flux. Cf. his comment on 6. 44. 3. Sāyaṇa seems to be right in view of the term *āsrāva bheṣaja* in 6. 44. 2.

various names such as *kasarṇīla*, *śvitra* (white one), *asita* (black one), *ratharvī*, *pṛdāku* (adder 10. 4. 5), *aghāśva*, *svaja*, *aghāyanta* (10. 4. 10), *tirasciraji* (cross-lined), *darvi*, *karikrata*, those white and black ones which live in *darbha* grass (10. 4. 13), *pṛdākva*, *daś nasi* (10. 4. 17), *kairata*, *pṛśna*, *upatṛṇya*, *babhra*, *alika*, *taimāta*, *babhru* (brown), *apodaka*, *sātrāsaha* (all powerful), *āligi* and *viligī* (father and mother), daughter of Urugūlā, born of black barbarian slave girl, *tābuva* and *tastuva* (5. 13. 5-11).[1] There are male and female members in the serpents (10. 4. 8). Takṣaka is the chief of the serpents He has ten heads and ten mouths. He is the Brāhmaṇa[2] among the serpents, the first to be born. He first drank Soma, which made his poison effectless (4. 6. 1). Garutmat the eagle, first devoured the poison of the serpents making absolutely no effect on him (4. 6. 2). In the serpents the poison is in the middle, top and bottom of their bodies (5. 13. 2).

Of all these serpents some only receive praise often viz., Asita, Tirascirāji, Svaja, Babhru and Devajanas (the gods, who control serpents or gods among serpents, 6. 56. 2). The serpents received great awe from the Atharvaṇic poets, who almost deified them. But Atharvaṇic priest being superior to the deities, claims to have fullest control over them. The poisoned arrow and poisoned herb are addressed by him to be impotent and sapless before his chant (4. 6. 6, 8). With his sight or strength,[3] with his poison, the sight, strength or poison of the serpent goes back to the serpent. The serpent is ordered not to live (5. 13. 4). The gods, the sun, the sky, the earth and the three Sarasvatīs have prepared a medicine against poison in the form of the water, which is poured on the waste lands in the form of rain and which the ants store in their ant-hills. The soil of the ant-hill is squeezed to secure water. The soil of the ant-hill, which is thus medicinal is the daughter of the Asuras and the sister of the gods (6. 10. 2-3). A blade of grass, tail of a horse and the seat of a chariot also kill serpent (10. 4. 2). The horse of Pedu[4] kills a number of serpents with its tail (10. 4. 5-7). A maiden of the Kirāta tribe knows a medicine against serpent-bite. She digs up the remedy with golden spade on the top of a mountain (10. 4. 14). A young physician (possibly Atharvaṇic priest) kills undauntedly a speckled serpent and scorpions too.

There are thus indications in the AV to the effect that serpents are a respectable class of divinities, who can be easily counted with Indra, Varuṇa and the gods in general. We are told of a chariot-race

[1] These proper names of the serpents are obscure in many places. For *taimata*, and some names of the serpents see, TILAK: Chaldean and Indian Vedas (1917) by pp. 131-136. And also BARTON, *JAOS*, 15, 1-27.

[2] This is Sāyaṇa's interpretation, see on 4. 6. 1.

[3] *PPP* reads *balena* for *cakṣuṣā* in *Śaunaka* recension.

[4] Aśvins gave this snake-destroying horse to Pedu Cf. RV 1. 117-119.

among Indra, Varuṇa, Devas and serpents. The chariot of Indra ran to the destination first and won the race. Next came the Devas, and the chariot of Varuṇa was third; while that of the serpents was the last (10. 4. 1). It seems possible that there was rivalry between Indra, Varuṇa and Devas on one hand and the serpents on the other. Unfortunately the serpents came last in the race, which decided their fate. However they are granted, in the system of divinities in the AV, a respectable position of the guardians of different directions. Asita guards the east, Tirasci̇rāji the south, Pṛdaku the west, and Svaja the north, along with Agni, Indra, Varuṇa and Soma, who are respectively the lords of those four directions (12. 3. 55-58). To the firm direction Śvitras are the guardians (12. 3. 59-60). Serpents are invoked along with other folks and demons to get ready and run after the enemies with their equipments and ensigns (11. 10. 1).

### (76) Upajīkās

These are the ants. The ant-hill contains moisture which has healing properties and it is used to cure the excessive discharge of blood from the body. It also cures fever, *atisāra*, *atimūtra* and abscess in the vein and in the kidney.[1] The spring water flowing down the mountain also contains excellent hundred medicinal qualities (2. 3. 1-2). The Asuras dig deep or bury deep this great wound-healer for the sake of safety.[2] The ants[3] bring up this remedy from the ocean or from any store of water.[4]

### (77) Dhamanis or the veins in the body

These veins are addressed at 1. 17 to stop the excessive flow of blood, either from wounds or menstruation. They are tied down. So the *hirās* (veins) are addressed as women, who have put on red garments to stop the flow of blood through them. They look like brotherless sisters, with their lustre disappeared (1. 17. 1). There are hundred principal veins (Dhamanis) and a thousand tributory veins. Together with these, the lower, upper and middlemost veins are also mentioned. The ends of the veins are stopped. Sikatavatī vein, which carries menstruation in the case of women, when disturbed, causes a disease called *aśmari*.[5] Dhanu is another vein in kidney. Both these veins become inflamed and interrupt other bruised veins. They are invoked to remain quiet and cause ease to the patient.[6]

1 Sāyaṇa on II. 3.

2 Bloomfield, AV p. 279.

3 Bloomfield *AJP*, VII, pp. 482-84.

4 See under serpents for anti-poison quality of this moisture in the ant-hills.

5 Sāyaṇa on 1. 17. 4.

6 Whitney and Bloomfield on 1. 17. 4 interprete differently. They understand this to be an application of bandage of dust and sand as is suggested by *sikatāvatī dhanu*. Kauśika 26. 10 supports them.

The hundred veins, *hirās* and a thousand tributories are again referred to (7. 35. 2-3), in connection with the violent charm of a woman against her rival. She declares that her hundred *hirās*, the subtle vein in the embryo and a thousand Dhamanis, the broader veins that envelop the embryo are all closed by her. So that no conception in her rival is possible. The embryo is also made topsy-turvy (7. 35. 2-3).

### (78) Kṛtyā

Kṛtyā is witchcraft. She is an image of doll, made by hands. The Kṛtyā is very skilfully prepared as a bride for wedding. She is of different forms (10. 1. 1). She is endowed with head, ears and nose. She walks across distant places (10. 1. 2). The *śāmulya*, the underwear of the bride in the marriage ceremonies, if not given away to the Brāhmaṇas along with money, actually becomes a walking Kṛtyā and enters the husband as his wife (14. 1. 25). The cow of a Brāhmaṇa (*brahmagavi*) is Kṛtyā in incarnate (12. 5. 12). So the Kṛtyā has feet and she walks. An expert witchcraft-maker prepares the Kṛtyā having two feet or four feet (10. 1. 24). This expert maker of Kṛtyā fits her with joints (10. 1. 8). Any one, who intends to further his desire may prepare Kṛtyā and set her against him or her. She may be prepared by a Śūdra, a king, a Kṣtriya, a Brāhmaṇa, any woman or by a woman, who has been rejected by her husband (10. 1. 3). Even the gods may prepare a Kṛtyā (5. 14. 7). Āṅgirasas were adept in preparing Kṛtyā who is called Āṅgirasī Kṛtyā. So also the Asuras were expert in this art. She may be made by oneself or by others (8. 5. 9). By means of Kṛtyā, consecration and sacrifice, one aspired to bring about the death of his adversary (8. 5. 15). The Kṛtyā may be buried in *barhis*, the sacred grass, in the field, in the burial ground or in the household fire (10. 1. 18). The Kṛtyā may be kept in a raw, unburnt earthen vessel, in blue red one, in raw flesh, in mixed grain, in men, in cock, in goat, in crested animal, in sheep, in one hoofed animals, in animals having two rows of teeth, in ass, in movable property, in personal possessions, in house, in assembly hall, in gambling house, in dice, in army, in arrows and weapons, in drum, in a well, in human bones, in the funeral fire and in the burning flesh-eating fire (5. 31. 1-9). There is not a place where they, who want to prepare Kṛtyā, cannot place her. Such persons are the makers of witchcraft, *kṛtyākṛts*, or those practising magic, *valagins*, or those digging roots *mūlins* or those sending out curses *śapathyam* (5. 31. 12). The person preparing Kṛtyā addresses her to go forth against his enemy (10. 1. 7). The Kṛtyā is then impelled to go against the person and to work out misfortune for him. As has been given above all three castes (*Vaiśya* not mentioned) men and women, Āṅgirasas and Asuras and all those ambitious and wronged men and women in the world prepared this

Kṛtyā. The AV also deals with that part of the witchcraft which aims at reverting the course of Kṛtyā and directing it against her maker.

The magical herb *apāmārga* removes Kṛtyā and cuts off the progeny of the witchcraft-maker. Ointment riverts the Kṛtyā (4. 9. 5, 19. 45. 1). *Jaṅgida* amulet throws back thirty-five witchcrafts and hundred witchcraft-makers (19. 34. 2). Sometimes an innocent man is caught in this witchcraft, i.e., Kṛtyā, who is directed against him. So the Atharvaṇic spells are addressed to Kṛtyā not to kill an innocent person. The Atharvaṇic priests grant protection to such innocent persons. But Āṅgirasas practised witchcraft and also reverted it. Pratīcīna Āṅgirasa is the most eminent *purohita* and leader. He reverts the Kṛtyās (10. 1. 6). The Kṛtyā being thus overwhelmed by the superior witchcraft-maker is called upon to walk off like a loudly braying she-ass loosened from its tether (10. 1. 14). Pratyaṅgiras, the expert leader in witchcraft asks the spell to go back like a crushing army with carts. Her course is blocked. She cannot go ahead, perhaps because her way is blocked by water. She is asked therefore to cross the ninety navigable rivers by another road (10. 1. 16). She is invoked to kill the cow, horse or servant of him, who had directed her first and to make him childless (10. 1. 17). The reverting Kṛtyā is not merely addressed to go back, but is wounded by cutting off her neck and feet by means of sword of brass in the house (10. 1. 20-21), and asked not to stand still like a wounded animal, but to go to her originator (10. 1. 27-28). If the Kṛtyā comes in darkness and if she is buried, she can also be detected, and sent back (10. 1. 18, 30). She comes by an unbeated path, but is sent back by a beaten one (5. 31. 10).

### (79) The two upper teeth of a child (6. 140).

The two upper teeth growing down desire to bite father and mother (6. 140. 1). The child's two teeth are offered a portion of rice and barley, then beans and sesame (6. 140. 2). The two pleasant, very propitious teeth growing together are invoked to leave away their horrible nature and not to injure the parents (6. 140. 3).

### (80) The head and heart or mind of a lover

The head of the lover, which is a symbol of virility is given by Soma. It brings about love, which agitates the lover's mind, and heart. On account of this address to the head of the lover, the mind of the lover is expected to go after the woman, who loves him (6. 84. 1-2).

### (81) Garment of Manu (7. 36-37).

In the *caturthikarma*, the rite on the fourth day, immediately preceding the consummation of the marriage,[1] the bride and

[1] See Kauśika 79. 2, 7.

bridegroom declare that their eyes with brightness and their face with freshness should inspire love for each other[1] (7. 36. 1). Then the bride envelopes her husband with her garment, which is produced by Manu, with the hope that her husband should be absolutely her alone and that he should not mention of other women (7. 37. 1). The bride's garment is given by Manu and is charmed to produce intense love between the two.

### (82) ARMOUR (19. 20).

The Varman (Armour) is invoked to grant protection which was given by the lord of the world, Prajāpati and Mātariśvan to the creatures (19. 20. 2). The armour was fastened on themselves by the gods while fighting for the kingship of heaven, and also by Indra. This armour is invoked to protect the wearer from all sides. (19-20-3).

### (83) DICE (7. 50. 9).

The dice are addressed to grant fruitful gambling[2] to the gambler like a milking cow. They are invoked further to confer on the gambler the steam of *kṛta*-throw.

### (84) ARBUDI AND NYARBUDI (11. 9).

Ārbudi and Nyarbudi are the two companions of Indra.

Arbudi is the name of a god and Nyarbudi is the lord (Deva and Iśāna). By these two, the atmosphere and this great earth are covered (11. 9. 4). They are the divine persons *devajana*, having huge army (11. 9. 5). The god Arbudi is not an independant god. He is ruled over by Maruts, Aditya, Brahmaṇaspati, Indra, Agni, Dhātṛ, Mitra and Prajāpati (11. 9. 25). They are the friends of the human beings, who invoke them and help them in winning the battle for them, dispersing and piercing the enemies (11. 9. 26). They arm themselves for fighting, and with fetters and shackles surround the enemy (11. 9. 3). They terrify the enemy by giving them a glimpse of the arms, the arrows, the power of the bows, the swords, the axes, the weapons and the designs in their mind. They also show to them the demons and *piśācas* produced by the magical spells or the meteors of the sky which are sevenfold (11. 9. 1, 6). They also make the enemy seek the bold and cowardly, those who stand firm and run away, those who are like dark goats, those who bleat like goats, and forest trees, plants, Gandharvas, Apsarasas, serpents, gods, holy folks and Fathers (11. 9. 22-24).[3] They embrace and crush the army by means of their hoods (*bhogebhiḥ*, 11. 9. 5). They stop

[1] See BLOOMFIELD, AV p. 546.

[2] *PPP* reads *divam* for *dyuvam* in 7. 50. 9. The sense would be 'grant me fruitful heaven'.

[3] These are the explanations of the word *udāra* given by Sāyaṇa. See his comment on 11. 9. 1. BLOOMFIELD, p. 123 interprets the word as spectress.

in-breathing and out-breathing of the army of the enemy and terrify them. As a result of this onslaught and crushing and piercing by these two divinities the arms and plans of the enemy are confused (11. 9. 12-13). Thus the enemy is dissolved, crushed, repulsed or killed making their mouths dry (11. 9. 21). Offering is made to these deities to be ready for battle with their army (11. 9. 6).

Arbudi and Nyarbudi are associated with the Triṣandhi (Vajra of three joints). According to Sāyaṇa,[1] Arbuda is a serpent sage[2] and traditional author of RV X. 94 and 175. He had two sons Arbudi and Nyarbudi. According to Kauśika (16. 21-26) they may be the personifications of the weapons used in the warfare of those times. It thus seems that these two deities, which do not occur anywhere else are the mysterious productions of the Atharvaṇic priests to frighten the enemy. They are the innovations of the Atharvaṇic poets. Arbuda in the RV[3] is the demon serpent defeated by Indra. In the AV Arbudi and Nyarbudi becomes the friends of Indra in killing the armies of the enemies on the battle-field.

### (85) Triṣandhi (11. 10).

Triṣandhi is the deity presiding over the Vajra, having three joints. It has got huge army of mysterious demonic creatures, divine beings like serpents and demons, who rise up to the call along with their red ensigns (11. 10. 1). Triṣandhi rules over all evil powers in the atmosphere, on the earth, and in the human beings (11. 10. 2). Triṣandhi is invoked along with Arbudi and Nyarbudi. Triṣandhi operates together with Kṛtyā, *purohita*, flesh-eating fire and death (11. 10. 6, 18). By Triṣandhi, Aditya and Indra are protected (11. 10. 11). Bṛhaspati, the descendant of Aṅgiras, and the seer, inspired by the *brahman*, used in the sky Triṣandhi, a missile for destroying the Asuras (11. 10. 10). In the same way the missile Triṣandhi to which an oblation is offered, would destroy all enemies, who may be safe as in the city of gods, or who may be protected by the *brahman*, armour or fortifications, or who may have put on coat-of-mail, or armour, or who may be riding in chariots or mounting the horses (11. 10. 24). The missile Triṣandhi envelopes the enemies in darkness and confuses them (11. 10. 19-20). Triṣandhi brings with it birds, having iron, pointed and thorny beaks, and who eat flesh and fly as swiftly as wind (11. 10. 3). Triṣandhi is a missile having white four-footed arrow, which pierces the enemy (11. 10. 6). Like Arbudi and Nyarbudi, Triṣandhi plays havoc in the army of the enemy and the birds of prey feed on the deceased bodies and the females of the killed soldiers lament for their death (11. 10. 7-8).

[1] See his comment on 11. 9. 1.
[2] Sāyaṇa (loc. cit) refers to AB 6. 11
[3] 2. 11. 20.

Bloomfield[1] conjectures that the natural basis of quasi-divinity is (Rudra's) lightning. But it is possible that the Arbudi, Nyarbudi and Trişandhi may refer to the magical missiles used in the ancient warfares, as is shown by Kauśika,[2] and by their association with Bṛhaspati, Aṅgirasa and Kṛtyā.

### (86) VAJRA

Vajra is a weapon of Indra in the RV. In the AV, Vajra becomes a magical divinity. It is addressed to kill the rivals so that they would not come out of the earth. It is described as the chief of the scather (6. 134. 2-3). The Vajra or thunderbolt smites down kingdom and life of the inimical king in the same way as Indra did of Vṛtra (6. 134. 1). It cuts to pieces, drinks up the breath of, and swallows the enemy (6. 135. 1-3). Agni killing the trickish Asuras, who go about putting on iron-nets, and having hooks with iron chains, is a thousand barbed thunderbolt (19. 66. 1).

### (87) ŚĀLĀ (HOUSE)

The house and its construction are deified in the AV. Savitṛ, Vāyu, Indra, Bṛhaspati are invoked to fix the pillars of the dwelling. The Maruts are called upon to sprinkle the floor of the house with water. The king Bhaga is asked to plough well the ground where the house is to be built (3. 12. 4). Śālā is the wife of Vāstospati (Māna).[3] She is a pleasant shelter. She has been fixed in the beginning by the gods and goddesses. She is dressed up in grass (3. 12. 6). The beam is invoked to ascend the pillar and not to kill the heroes. Śālā is invoked to give shelter for hundred autumns (3. 12. 6). Śālā is the excellent dwelling for the heroes, cows, and calves. She yields wealth in horses, cows, food, happiness and milk (3. 12. 1-3). She is a dwelling of spacious roof, containing a store of inexhaustible food grains (3. 12. 3). The dwelling is fixed. Then a boy, young man, calf with other cattle, and a man with a jar full of water, and with other jars full of curds enter the house to live in it (3. 12. 7).

The owner of the house may come to his house after a long time,[4] and feels that the intelligent house is bearing food, winning wealth, and meeting him with friendly and mild eyes as before (7. 60. 1). It recognizes the owner coming after long absence. It is invoked to recognize the owner (7. 60. 2). When invoked it becomes companion, full of wealth and enjoying sweets together. It becomes devoid of hunger and thirst.

[1] AV p. 637.
[2] 16. 21-26.
[3] Sāyaṇa at 3. 12. 5. interpretes Māna as the lord of the house.
[4] Kauśika 24. 11.

(88) MADHUKAŚĀ (9. 1).

Madhukaśā (honey whip) is the strong child of the Maruts (9. 1. 3d). She is the mother of Ādityas, a daughter of the Vasus, breath of the creatures and navel of immortality (9. 1. 4a b). The Madhukaśā is born of the heaven, earth, atmosphere, sea, (9. 1. 1). Also from fire and wind she is sprung (9. 1. 3c). The gods begot the whip of honey. From it came the embryo, having universal form. As soon as she is born, she, the young one, is fed by her mother. The young child of the honey-ship looks at the created things, soon after it is born (9. 1. 5). The Madhukaśā is clothed in nectar. All creatures become delighted in their heart at her sight (9. 1. 1c d). She is possessed of golden colour. She, the great embryo, dripping in ghee moves among the mortals (9. 1. 4cd). Madhukaśā has in her, the sap of all forms. She is called the seed of the ocean. She comes bestowing gifts, breath and immortality (9. 1. 2). Men on the earth variously think of her action (9. 1. 3a b). The Brahman, the wise Atharvaṇic priest gets inspiration for offering the cup of Soma that comes from her heart. She yields a thousand streams from her inexhaustible breasts (9. 1. 6-7). Madhukaśā is identified with divine cow, giving out the sound '*him*', bestowing strength, lowing for three *gharmas* (caldrons for heating milk) and dripping out milk (9. 1. 8). The waters, the mighty bull, wait upon her, who is fattened with milk and pour nourishment on her, who is in turn caused to pour nourishment for an enlightened person (9. 1. 9). This whip of honey has the earth as the staff, the atmosphere as the embryo, the heaven as the whip, and lightning as the whipcord.[1] The tip of the whip is golden (9. 1. 21). The seven honies of the honey-whip are: Brāhmaṇa, king, cow, bull, barley, rice, and honey. He who knows these seven milkings of Madhukaśā becomes rich in honey and wins the worlds which are rich in honey (9. 1. 22-23).

Bloomfield[2] considers that Madhukaśā belongs to the Aśvins. RV (1. 22. 3, 157. 4) refers to Madhumatī kaśā of the Aśvins. Bloomfield further considers that the Atharvans are mentioned in the RV (9. 11. 2) to have mixed milk with honey. The sage Atharvan, the seer of this hymn attributes to the honey-whip creative and sustaining power and places men in the attitude of deeply speculative reverence to it. Oldenberg[3] considers Madhukaśā to be the morning dew. Henry[4] thinks this to be a reference to the lightning which whips the clouds and produce rain.

[1] This is the interpretation of Bloomfield, ibid p. 232, of the word *prakāśā*. Whitney ibid p. 521 interpretes it as snapper. *PPP* reads *prakaśā* for *prakāśā*, *PPP*'s reading is more intelligent. It means 'the madhukaśā has the light in the form of lightning' i.e., the flash of the lightning is the lash of the honey-whip.

[2] Ibid p. 587.

[3] *Religion des Veda*, p. 209.

[4] *Les livres* VIII et ix de L'Atharva-veda, p. 115.

The hymn (9. 1) describing the Madhukaśā is clearly divided in three parts, viz., *ṛcs* 1-10, 10-20, and 21-24. In the second part of the hymn (*ṛcs* 10-20) the Aśvins are praised to bestow lustre and honey so that the singer would speak sweet words among the people. There is no reference to their whip in this part. In the first and third part of the hymn there is no reference to Aśvins, or their relation with Madhukaśā. The third part is in the style of the Brāhmaṇas, with their characteristic words '*ya evaṁ veda*' (9. 1. 23-24). So also there is the reference to the seven honies of Madhukaśā. They refer to the most prominent castes (Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriyas) and food and cattle (9. 1. 22). Madhukaśā seen carefully in the first part of the hymn, where she is identified with cow, seems to be nothing but a deity of rain, coming down from the sky, born of wind and fire, the sun and is the daughter of Maruts. In this light, without its connection with Aśvins, one can easily explain the significance of all attributes of Madhukaśā (9. 1. 1-17).

### (89) A King

A king on the earth is the prototype of Indra in the heaven. A king is the lord of beings. Himself prosperous he puts vigour in the beings. Mṛtyu in the form of the deceased ancestors of the king waits upon him. Mṛtyu, the king is called upon to favour the kingdom (4. 8. 1). The gods bless the king who is to be installed on the throne. (4. 8. 2d). As the king approaches the throne, all wait upon him. He clothes himself in fortune, looking himself bright. He, having all forms and bearing the great name of Asura, the mighty, approaches the immortal things (4. 8. 3). All people and the divine waters long for the king (4. 8. 4c d). The installed king is the friend of Indra. He becomes superior to all (4. 22. 6). The king is the symbol of a lion and a tiger in his courage, defiance and fighting spirit. He is the sole chief of all people (4. 22. 6). He is, in short, the human Indra.

### (90) Sītā (3. 17).

Sītā is the furrow made by plough in a field. This blessed one, is paid reverence and invoked to be willing and fruitful to the agriculture (3. 17. 8). Sītā is anointed with ghee and honey. She is approached by all gods and the Maruts. She is called upon to bestow on the agriculturist milk, ghee and food (3. 17. 9).

### (91) Aśmavarman[1] (or the stones employed as defence)

For securing welfare of the house or village or city, six pieces of stones, four in each of the four direction, one in the ground and one above are buried in the ground. The stone is an armour, a defence to protect in six directions, from the attacks of the malicious assailant and to revert these back to them (5. 10. 1-6).

[1] See Kauśika, 49. 7-9.

### (92) BRAHMAJĀYĀ, A WIFE OF A BRĀHMAṆA (5. 17).[1]

A wife of a Brāhmaṇa, if obstructed of or tortured or if abducted by any person does not remain an ordinary wife of a Brāhmaṇa, but assumes a terrible form, capable of wild destruction. If a Brāhmaṇa remains without a wife for a night in a house, no cow would yield milk, nor a bull endure the yoke (5. 17. 18). A wife of a Brāhmaṇa, if obstructed or harassed, becomes like a meteors with dishevelled hair, foretelling the utter destruction of the kingdom where she stays (5. 17. 4). The abduction of Brahmajāyā leads to deadly consequences. If a woman, having even ten non-Brāhmaṇa former husbands, is taken by a Brāhmaṇa holding her hand, she becomes a wife of the Brāhmaṇa and not of any former husband. The sun goes on proclaiming to the five clans of men that the Brāhmaṇa, and not a Kṣatriya nor a Vaiśya is the husband of that woman (5. 17. 8-9). If a Brāhmajāyā is harassed or abducted, she causes the abortion of the embryos, and the death of the living creatures and heroes (3. 17. 7). A king must be particularly careful about the status of Brahmajāyā. If she is obstructed through ignorance, no man can lie on his couch with his blessed wife; no wide-eared, broad-headed ox is born in that dwelling; the cook cannot kill animals for serving at the table and no lotus can grow in the ponds of his field (5. 17. 16).

### (93) BRAHMAGAVĪ OR A COW OF A BRĀHMAṆA AND (94) BRĀHMAṆA

Brāhmaṇa is a holy person. He is not to be injured like fire. His relation is Soma and Indra is his protector against imprecations (5. 18. 6). He is not to be killed and to be used as food, for he takes away the authority, splendour and burns the Kṣatriya, who outrages him. The assailant of a Brāhmaṇa virtually drinks the poison of Taimāta serpent (5. 18. 4). Thinking him to be mild or innocent, if any hater of the gods kills him to secure his wealth, in his heart Indra kindles fire and both the firmaments hate him (5. 18. 5). The food of a Brāhmaṇa if robbed, is turned into a weapon of hundred barbs. The tongue of Brāhmaṇa becomes a bow-string, his voice an arrow neck, and his teeth become shafts besmeared with penance. With these, (i e., words of imprecation) Brāhmaṇa discharges the arrows, which are as if sent by gods, capable of piercing the heart of the hater of the gods (5. 19. 7-8). The Brāhmaṇas have sharp arrows and missiles, which when hurled do not become in vain. With their penance and anger they pierce a person even from afar (5. 18. 9). Like a poisoned arrow, like an adder, is the deadly arrow of a Brāhmaṇa (5. 18. 15). Brāhmaṇa has the gods as his relations, and therefore those who revile him do not reach heaven by the roads crossed by the Fathers (5. 18. 13). Those, who oppress the

[1] RV 10. 109, has got 1-3, 5, 6, 10, 11 *ṛcs* of this Atharvaṇic hymn i.e. seven out of eighteen *ṛcs* occur in RV.

children of a Brāhmaṇa or a Brāhmaṇa himself have nothing but a tragic end. Their seat is the leaf of a plant tied to the dead body. They drink that water only which is dripping down the eyes of a Brāhmaṇa (5. 19. 12-3). Ninety-nine persons lost their life, being shaken off by the earth, since they harassed the children of Brāhmaṇa (5. 19. 11).

Thus it seems that the reference to the Brāhmaṇas is in general, intended to show to the whole world their power and capacity to work ruin of those who oppress them. But the term Brāhmaṇa seems to refer to the Brāhmaṇas of the Bhṛgvaṅgiras clan only. The cre 5.19.8 refers to the term Brahmā instead of Brāhmaṇa, which means an Ātharvaṇa priest. Moreover the example given here to illustrate their harassment shows that those, who were oppressed were Bhārgavas and Āngirasas. The Sṛñjaya Vaitahavyas[1] had become very powerful. They almost were touching the heaven. They fell down from it and were perished, when they assaulted Bhṛgu. Similarly Bṛhastsaman, the descendant of Aṅgiras was pierced by some, whose children were devoured by that Brāhmaṇa becoming a ram with two rows of teeth. This shows that some Kṣatriyas were against these Bhṛgvaṅgirasas and they, its eems, assaulted them. These Brāhmaṇas becoming conscious of their capacity, naturally destroyed them (5. 19. 1-2). Some, wanting wealth from them insulted and spat on the Brāhmaṇas. As a result of this they sit in the middle of the pool of the blood eating their hair (5. 19. 3).

Thus the quarrel between the Bhṛgvaṅgirasas and Kṣatriyas must have been started from their wealth. Some of the Brāhmaṇas, who may be their priests must have refused to return a part of the fees, they received from them. Some Brāhmaṇas of the Bhṛgvaṅgirasas clan might have been assaulted or killed in this scuffle by the rude Kṣatriyas. The wealth of a Brāhmaṇa must have prominently consisted of cows, which were thus robbed of them. Even their wives must have been abducted (*see* previous section). The Brahmagavī thus stands for the outrages committed by the Kṣatriyas against the Bhṛgvaṅgirasas. The cow of a Brāhmaṇa should not be used by the king for eating, for it is given to the Brāhmaṇa by the gods. If, however, the king is wretched one and if he takes away the cow for his food, the cow becomes an adder with deadly poison and kills the king (5. 18. 1-3). The Vaitahavyas[2] were ten hundred and ruled a thousand, but having devoured a cow of the Brāhmaṇas[3] were perished. The Vaitahavyas roasted for themselves the last she-goat of

[1] See Bloomfield, AV, p. 433-34 and *Vedic Index*, Vol. II p. 469.

[2] The descendants of Sṛñjayas, who are also called Vītahavyas. See *Vedic Index* Vol. II, p. 328.

[3] The Bhṛgus. See 5. 19. 1.

Kesaraprābandhā,[1] and killed a cow of a Brāhmaṇa, which destroyed them (5. 18. 10-11). The cow of the Brāhmaṇa, when roasted thus destroyed the lustre of the kingdom. No mighty hero is born there. Its killing is cruel. It is an offence against the Fathers. The cow becomes eight-footed, four-eyed, four-eared, four-jawed, two-mouthed, and two-tongued and shakes down the kingdom of the king, who oppresses a Brāhmaṇa or his cow (5. 19. 4-8). Even the trees do not allow such person to come under their shade. Thus Nārada is emphatically told. King Varuṇa made the cow of the Brāhmaṇa to be the god-made poison (5. 19. 9-10). The cow of the Brāhmaṇa is created by penance and exertion, acquired by the *brāhman* and supported by *ṛta*. It is the noblest and the most holy creature in the world. The Brāhman is its guide and overlord (12. 5. 1-4). All power, vigour, worldly prosperity, sovereignty and food go away from a Kṣatriya who takes the cow of the Brāhmaṇa (12. 5. 7-11). The cow is a witchcraft incarnate. All terrible things and death reside in it (12. 5. 12-40). It becomes the flesh-eating fire and consumes the Kṣatriya (12. 5. 41). The cow of the Brāhmaṇa is the daughter of Aṅgiras, belonging to all gods (12. 5. 52-53). It is not to be killed, hence it is called *aghanyā* (12. 5. 58). It will thus be seen that nothing is more deadly, more ghastly and more destructive than killing the cow of the Brāhmaṇa by a Kṣatriya king, who might resort to such a thing being proud of his position as a ruler. Atharvan, the seer of (5. 22), emphatically points out that such a king will not remain in this world and all chances of securing heaven for him will be blocked. The cow thus is a divinity of tremendous power capable of shattering to pieces its killer or oppressor.

### (95) The Cows

Aghnyā, a cow is invoked to attach herself to the calf as a man to his beloved or as a male elephant to its female (6. 70. 1-3). The cows are invoked to be rich in calves, grazing in good pasture, drinking clean water at a good watering place (7. 75. 1ab). They know their track. They wander together. They have universal names. They are prayed as divine beings and invoked to come with gods and goddesses to the cow-stall, sprinkling their owner with ghee. They are also prayed to be free from a thief, evil-minded person and Rudra's missiles (7. 76. 1-2). The cows are kept in a stall which is comfortable, rich and prosperous. They are united with all good things that the day brings[2] (3. 14. 1). They are also united with Pūṣan, Bṛhaspati and Indra (3. 14. 2). They bring to the owner

[1] Bloomfield takes this expression to mean a woman having braided hair. See AV p. 432-33. Ludwig in his translation of the RV. 2. 447 seems to take the word to mean a cow. But the context shows that Kesaraprābandhā is a woman of the Bhṛgvaṅgirasa clan, whose, even a goat was robbed by the Vaitahavyas.

[2] See Whitney, AV, p. 109.

sweet honey (3. 14. 3). The cows are invoked to flourish, like *śaka* and *śāriśāka*,[1] to multiply and to bring abundance of wealth to the owner (3. 14. 4-6).

### (96) Śyena

The divine Śyena is the sun. He has Indra as a companion. He comes to the men crossing water lands, waters, and all low places. He is the heavenly eagle, beholding men and having thousand feet. He is invoked to bring fortune (7. 41. 1-2). On account of the speedy flight of Śyena, he is identified with sacrifice (6. 48. 1).

### (97) The heavenly dog (6. 80).

The heavenly dog flies through the sky observing all creatures (6. 80. 1). It is born in the water. It stays in the heaven. On the earth and in the ocean its greatness is spread. Offerings are made to its greatness (6. 80. 3). The heavenly dog is thus the sun.[2] Sāyaṇa[3] understands it to be divine dog which formerly was one of the demons, Kālakāñjas.

### (98) Rats, Locusts, etc. (6. 50).

The rats, locusts and other troublesome creatures eat away the grains of barley and others. They are addressed to go away without causing any harm. They are the lords of Tardā and Vagha[4] (6. 50. 1-3).

### (99) Vājin or horse (6. 92).

A horse having the swiftness of wind is urged to go with the impulse of Indra. It is harnessed by the Maruts. Tvaṣṭṛ puts speed in its feet. It is asked to win the race with all its quickness and speed. It is invoked to bring prosperity (6. 92. 1-3).

### (100) Yaminī (3. 28).

A female giving birth to the twins is called Yaminī. The female (cows, mare, etc.)[5] angrily destroys the cattle, becoming herself a flesh-eater. She should be given away to the Brahman (an Atharvaṇic priest, 3. 28. 1-2). She is invoked to be propitious to men, cows, horses and fields (3. 28. 3-4). She herself is born by

[1] *PPP* reads *śakā*. Sāyaṇa on 3. 14. 4. explains this word as 'fly', 'multiply like flies'. Grill in his translation explains it as 'plants'. Weber renders it by 'dung', which seems to be probable, taking into consideration the fertilising quality of the manure of dung. See *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 345. *Śāriśākā*, an obscure word. Bloomfield, AV p. 351, emends it as *śāri-śukeva* like starlings and parrots.' But it is not connected with fattening or flouring of the cows. See Whitney, ibid p. 110. Also see *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 374.

[2] Bloomfield, AV. p. 500 and TB 1. 1. 2. 4-6.

[3] See his comment on 6. 80. 1.

[4] Sāyaṇa explains it as insects, pests, etc., that cause nuisance to the crops and grains. See his comment on 6. 50. 3.

[5] See Kauśika 109. 5, 110. 4, 111. 5.

normal and one by one creation. If she gives birth to the twins, she is prayed not to injure men and cattle (3. 28. 1a, 5-6).

### (101) TIGER, WOLF AND THIEF (4. 3).

The tiger is the first of the toothed beasts (4. 3. 4). A householder or a traveller may be attacked by any of these. So they are addressed to go away by distant roads or submit to the traveller, who possesses the Ātharvaṇa charm to crush tiger, etc., (4. 3. 2, 7). The eyes, mouth and twenty claws of the tiger are ground up.

### (102) A BULL (7. 111).

The bull released in honour of a deity is a belly of Indra, holding Soma. It is the soul of the gods and men. It is invoked to generate offsprings in the world (7. 111. 1).[1]

## X

## THE SACRIFICIAL DEITIES

The word *yajña* (sacrifice) occurs about 300 times in the AV. It occupies a very important place in the Ātharvaṇic ideology. In addition the number of the sacrifices, sponsored by the followers of the three Vedas, the Atharvavedins evolved a new course of sacrifices, which is called *sava*. *Yajña* in its old and new forms also was prevalent among its followers. Sacrifice and its ritual reached in advanced and in last stages, an ideal form. The Atharvavedins elevated the importance of *Yajña* to its highest extent. It was made a deity to whom, along with the lord of *Yajña* offerings were offered. *Yajña* is prayed to go to its lord and its own source. The lord of *Yajña* is Viṣṇu or the sacrificer himself, according to Sāyaṇa (7. 102. 5). Sacrifice has a divine origin and contains divine power. The sacrifice brings about excellent heroism (7. 102. 6).[2] The lord of mind is addressed to carry the sacrifice to the gods in the heaven. *Yajña*, performed on the earth is to be taken to the heaven, where it became fruitful (7. 102. 8). This pertains to the sacrifice performed with a view to securing heavenly bliss, a place in *svarga*. But this is not the only function of the sacrifice. *Yajña* is an omnipotent weapon. It is all powerful. It overcomes the rivals. Offerings to Agni with oblations enable the sacrificer and the sacrifice to secure power to overcome the enemies (6. 97. 1). Thus sacrifice enables to secure the divine and material power. *Yajña* itself can be performed mentally and used for securing spiritual power. The different

[1] See Sāyaṇa's comment on 7. 111. 1.

[2] *PPP* reads differently. For *yajñapati*, the reading is *yajamāna*. According to *PPP* thus sacrifice belongs to *yajamāna* and brings excellent heroism to him.

sense organs in the body offer oblations of restraint to the objects of the sense organs in the highest spirit. This enables them to continue their life, splendour, breath, and the organs of hearing and seeing forever (19. 58. 1). Prāṇa is invoked to stay forever in the body. The earth, Soma, Bṛhaspati and Agni bestow splendour on the sacrificer. So the body, life and splendour are with their forms in tact (19. 58. 2). The splendour bestowed on by the heaven and earth gives the sacrificer power to move round the earth (19. 58. 3). Their body becomes strong. It is like coat-of-mails and unassialable city of metals. Only thing required for this, is that the spoon of the sacrificer, the means of offering this mental sacrifice should be prevented from leaking and be strong (19. 58. 4). The help of the gods is invoked to this sacrifice in which the senses like eye, hearing and others are offered in the sacrifice of mind (19. 58. 5). The sacrificers and priests of the gods come to enjoy this sacrifice in as much number as possible (19. 58. 6). By such sacrifice, mental and spiritual power is attained to have free movement through out the earth and heaven and thus to command the activities and thoughts of the people. This is a spiritual sacrifice and is the anterior form of Yoga. The sacrificer thus becomes a Yogin with tremendous power at his disposal.

Yajñā is said to be produced and have to come into being. It increased and became overlord of the gods. Yajña thus becoming overlord of the gods, has naturally command over the fortunes of the people in this world (7. 5. 2). The gods are fed with offerings in the Yajña; they are dependant on Yajña. Even the gods offered sacrifice to the gods with immortal mind. (7. 5. 3).

Yajña is offered to Ṛc and Sāman (the Ṛgveda and Sāmaveda). The sacrificial acts are performed with the help of these. These two shine in the sacrifice and carry the sacrifice among the gods. From the Ṛcs, Samans and Yajus, the oblation, vigour and strength are sought. The Vedas do not injure any one (7. 54. 1-2). Thus the power behind the attainment of sovereignty by sacrifice is the Vedas. They bring about the whole power.

In the construction of the Vedi, *darbhas* are scattered about. They are addressed as deity. They enclose the Vedi. They do not rob the *darbhas* scattered elsewhere. The seat of Hotṛ is golden. In the world of the sacrificer these become the ornaments of gold (7. 99. 1). Similarly the *darbhas*, the Vedi, the axe for cutting the *samidhs* and *drughaṇa* (a sythe for felling down the trees) are deified. These are the holy objects, loving sacrifice. They are invoked to accept the sacrifice (7. 28).

Symbolical sacrifice attained more popularity and was believed to yield more power than an ordinary sacrifice. When the gods offered the sacrifice with Puruṣa, they extended the sacrifice. But the sacrifice, in which no oblations were offered, was very vigorous

(7. 5. 4). The dogs offered a sacrifice of gods and limbs of the cow. They were confounded with the sacrifice. Mysterious is the effect of the sacrifice performed in mind. The performer of such sacrifice was highly valued (7. 5. 5). Atharvan, the Father, the relation of the Devas, or the universal lord,[1] a young child of the mother, understood the sacrifice with mind. He is invoked to proclaim the technique of the sacrifice. The symbolical and spiritual or mental sacrifices must have been sponsored, given currency to by Atharvan, the Father. This sacrifice, being symbolically and mentally performed, required less labour and money. At the same time they were very efficacious. They endowed the performer mysterious power to penetrate the things in nature and capacity to move unrestrained. This new technique of Yājña, became very favourite with the Atharvavedins, as they simplified the course of ritual in sacrifice and made it yield more spiritual and mental power. As long as a man is alive, he must live as a powerful man and after death, he should enjoy the pleasures of heaven. This was, in brief, the sacrificial policy of the Atharvaṇic seers (7. 2. 1).

Three times in a day the offerings were offered in Agni. This formed the daily worship of Agni. Agni in the morning, with a verse in Gāyatri metre, Visvadevas, Indra, Maruts in the noon and third libation is to the Kavis, who sent their ladles filled with offerings to the deities. The descendants of Sudhanvan (one of the three sons of Ṛbhu), who attained the heaven are invoked to conduct the offering to the better world (6. 47).

The renewal of Agni is done after the fashion of Manu, who kindled him. Fire is renewed in new place or in an old place with an oblation of ghee (7. 82. 6).

The *homas*, like Yajñas are also deified (7. 102. 5). The *homas* are addressed to increase the sacrifice in every form. The *homa* is a deity (19. 1. 1-3). There are seven *homas* and seven *samidhs* (8. 9. 18).

Sacrifice is also used for magical purpose to destroy the enemy. A rival, so and so, who is the son of such and such mother and of such and such family (the name of the enemy is to be supplied), is to be fallen downward and is to be disportioned from splendour, brilliancy, breath and life, the name of the sacrifice, conquered booty, truth, brilliancy, the *brahman* and sacrifices. The name of the sacrifice performed by the priest of magic is powerful enough to bring about the downfall of the enemy. The enemy is caught in the fetters of Grāhi, Nirṛti, ill luck, calamity, the sages, Bṛhaspati, Āṅgirasas, Atharvans and the descendants of Atharvan. Thus the enemy or rival of the performers of the *brahman* and sacrifice is entangled in the fetters of death, which are akin to those of the Āṅgirasas and Atharvans (16. 8).

[1] *PPP* reads *visvadeva* for *devabandhu* at 7. 2. 1.

Such is the greatness of the sacrifice of the Atharvavedins. All time-honoured sacrifices are included in the remnant of the cooked rice used in the Brahmaudana rite. The Ṛcs, Samans are there. All parts of the sacrifices such as Aindrāgna, Pāvamāna, Mahānāmnī, Mahāvrata are included in the remnant, which is the same as the Brahman. Also there are in it the sacrifices such as Rājasūya, Vājapeya, Agniṣṭoma, Adhvara,[1] Arka and Aśvamedha. A number of sacrifices became out of use because they were difficult to be performed. Such sacrifices like Satras, required long time and consequently they were out of practice. All these were deposited in the Brahman (the spell or potency arising out of the Atharvaṇic performance of Brahmaudana rite). All sacrifices and their rites, small or big, lost in the course of time or still current were deposited in the remnant of cooked rice. This shows how some of the time-honoured sacrifices were not practised being, more tedious and cumbrous and others were deposited in the remnant of the offerings in a Sava (11. 7. 5-8).

Yajña is not only included in the remnant of the cooked rice oblation of Brahmaudana Sava (offering of cooked rice in honour of the Brahman) but is identified with the Brahman in all its details. The Brahman is *hotṛ* and the sacrifice. By the Brahman the sacrificial posts are set up. Adhvaryu is born of the Brahman and in the Brahman, offerings are placed. The Brahman is the ladle filled with ghee. Vedi is set up with the Brahman. The Brahman is the essence of Yajña and of the priests who prepare the oblation (19. 42. 1-2). The Brahman is the Atharvaṇic spell and also the mysterious power arising out of its use.[3]

Yajña in the AV has not remained merely a simple process of invoking a deity with simple offerings, but assumed a state of symbolism. All time-honoured great sacrifices having fallen in disuse, a simple technique of sacrifice was evolved by the Atharvaṇic teachers. Yajñas are performed by the Atharvavedins to secure the worldly gains and the heaven, but they are set up in a new technique of their Brahman. Thus sometimes it assumes the form of the symbolism and metaphorical representation. Hospitality shown to a guest by a householder is a kind of Yajña. All details of the reception are on par with the parts of the sacrifice. The fruit of sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma, Atirātra, Satra and Dvādaśāha are on par with the offering of milk, curds, honey and flesh to the guest (9. 6. 40). Thus it seems that the Atharvaṇic poet emphasises the moral that even receiving the guest with simple offerings is sufficient to bring the fruit of these great sacrifices. It only tells us that these great sacrifices were not much within the scope of the

[1] A sacrifice where no killing of victims take place is called Adhvara. Arka is Cayana sacrifice.

[2] '*Utsanna yajña* is explained by Sāyaṇa as '*luptaprāya yajña*'.

[3] See under Brahman.

people in general; so Atharvan, the seer of the hymn (9. 6) teaches that by even performing some simple acts of receiving a guest and performing the Sava-rites one would get the desired fruit. But this would be an idle talk, if there is no authority behind this. This authority is the mysterious power arising out of the Brahman (9. 6).

(1) Having described the general tendency of the Atharvaṇic Yajña as a deity, let us now turn to some of its special forms. Yajña is a means of securing worldly gains or the heaven. In addition to a number of Sava-rites, there are many rites to secure heaven. A couple, in order to secure heaven after death, in ripe old age offers cooked offering to fire. The great sacrifice, as it goes to the heaven, with mind and favour is accompanied by the sacrificer (6. 122). Agni Vaiśvanara comes to the Yajña at the time of the songs and in the time of the distress of the singer. He shapes the praise and songs of the Āṅgirasas. Agni Vaiśvānara is invoked to extend the brightness and heaven to the Āṅgirasas. Thus Agni favours the Āṅgirasas and enables them to reach the heaven (6. 35).

(2) Savitṛ and Tvaṣṭṛ are offered oblations to assign wealth to the sacrificer (7. 17. 4). Confluent oblation is offered for securing the abundance of wealth[1] and fountain of ghee, milk and water (1. 15. 2-3). Agni is invoked to increase the Brahman and Yajña of the sacrifice (3. 20. 3). Brahman and Yajña in the Atharvaṇic practice stand for each other and mean one and the same thing.

(3) *Expiation.* (*a*) Viśvedevas are invoked to free the sacrificer from sin committed knowingly and unknowingly in walking or sleeping (6. 115. 1-2). (*b*) In the incompletely performed sacrifice of offering ghee with ladle, theDevas are invoked to remove their wrath, caused by the sacrificers' acts (6. 114. 1-3). (*c*) There is an error caused by the fault of the financier of the sacrificer in the sacrifice; hence the priests do not prosper. So in a new sacrifice, the priests try to rectify the wrong. The institutor of Yajña allowed some unauthorized persons to partake of Soma. Some sages noticed this fact. These were the horrible sages. Homage is paid to their eye and truthfulness (2. 35. 1-5). Thus if a sacrifice remains incomplete or is wrongly performed, on account of the fault of the financier of the sacrifice, the sacrifice does not give the desired effect. The sages or priests who can rectify these faults are terrible indeed (*ghorāḥ ṛṣayaḥ* 2. 35. 4). These sages thus point out the necessity of a Superintending authority over the whole ritual of sacrifice. The expiatory sacrifices speak well for the function of the Brahmā priest, who

[1] *Saṁsrāvya* offering. Water is brought from the navigable rivers and sprinkled. In that water are cooked milk and mixed grain. This is offered in a sacrifice. Cf. Kauśika 19. 4. As the wealth is not produced by Yajña, it is simply transferred from the rich to the poor by it. So a person desiring to deprive the wealth of another, Kauśika further says, should bring rich ghee milk from any house and cook rice, mixed with milk and eat it.

employs his *brahmans* (or spells) to rectify the error in the sacrifice and by means of his truthfulness and vegilence leads the sacrifice to success. (*d*) A drop of water falling from sky is inauspicious. Offering is made to Nirṛti to atone for the sin and to unite with the sacrifice (i.e., its fruit 6. 124. 1).

4. *Superiority*. (*a*) A sacrifice of the enemy is withdrawn by a counter sacrifice for securing success to his party (1. 9. 4). (*b*) If any godless person plots against the sacrificer, a sacrifice compels him to surrender to him. Similarly a sacrifice compels to surrender a person, who attacks the fame of a sacrificer (6 6. 1-3). (*c*) A sacrifice is offered to keep back the deadly dart of the enemy and save the sacrifice. A *sāman—adārasṛt*[1] is sung to escape split or difficulty. Maruts are offered an offering to escape the portent, imprecation or hatred of others (1. 20. 1). (*d*) Whosoever with witchcraft (*kṛtyā*), consecration or Yajña would attempt to kill a person, would meet death at the hands of Indra's hundred-jointed thunderbolt (8. 5. 15). (*e*) Agni destroys demons and sorcerers when offered with offerings (8. 3). (*f*) A rival or enemy is expelled from Yajña by means of the water-thunderbolts called Viṣṇukrama (10. 9. 31).

As has been observed above, the sacrifice is conceived as a deity, possessed of great power and is identified with the Brahman in whom all sacrifices rest. Also the Atharvaṇic poets have evolved a technique of mental or spiritual sacrifices and some simpler forms of sacrifices called Savas. There are twenty-two Savas treated in the AV. Speaking with respect to the AV *saṁhitā*, with the help of the *Kauśika Sūtra*,[2] one can notice the variety of the sacrificial deities and the offerings given to them. These Savas are in conformity with the ideology of the Atharvaṇic poets. They aim at simplicity and efficacy. Regarding the latter, one has to rely on the teachers themselves. About the former, one can easily notice it in their treatment below. In the place of the old time-honoured and out-of-date sacrifices, the Atharvaṇic teachers gave currency to these rites for securing their goal.

The Savas are the following: (1) Brahmaudana 11. 1. (2) Svargaudana 12. 3, 3. 6. 1. (3) Catuśśarāva 1. 31. 1. (4) Avi Sava 3. 29. (5) Ajaudanasava 4. 14. (6) Śataudana Sava 10. 9. (7) Brahmāsyaudana Sava 4. 34. (8) Pancaudana Sava 9. 5. (9) Atimṛtyu Sava 4. 35. (10) Anaḍuh Sava 4. 11. (11) Karki Sava 4. 38. 5. (12) Pṛśni Sava 6. 21. 1, 7. 22. 1. (13) Pṛsnigā Sava 6. 31. 1, 7. 22. 1. (14) Paunaḥśila Sava 6. 30. 1. (15) Pavitra Sava 6. 19. 1. (16) Urvara Sava 7. 104. 1. (17) Ṛṣabha Sava 9. 4. (18) Vaśā Sava 10. 10, 12. 4. (19) Anaḍvāha Sava 9. 7. (20) Vāśā Sava 12. 4. (21) Śālā Sava 9. 3. (22) Bṛhaspati Sava 11. 3.

[1] *Pañcaviṁśa brāhmaṇa*, 15. 3. 7.

[2] Cf. Kauśika, 60-68.

They are divided into three divisions by Sāyaṇa in introduction to 1. 31, as *nitya*, *naimittika* and *kāmya*.

It will be proper to go through the deities of each of these Savas and then to estimate their importance as such.

(1) BRAHMAUDANA (11. 1).

This Sava offering is the representation of Soma sacrifice. The Brāhmaṇas are fed with a third part of the cooked rice. The other two parts are offered to the gods and *pitṛs* (11. 1. 5). Odana, the cooked rice is offered to the Brāhmaṇas, who are Bhṛgvaṅgirovids, hence the Sava is called Brahmaudana.[1] Odana is the deity of this sacrifice. Odana is compared with the shoots of Soma (11. 1. 18). This offering of rice, called Brahmaudana, secures for the couple, who offers the Sava, the summit of the firmament, which is called *Svarga* (11. 1. 7). With the help of the mortar and pestal the grains are pounded (11. 1. 9). The pounded rice grains are holy (*yajñiya*) and are then sifted from the husk, by means of winnowing basket (11. 1. 12). Fire is enkindled. Pot is kept on it with water. The rice grains are put in it. These grains are purified by means of the spells, and mixed with ghee (11. 1. 18). The rice grains swell up in the process of cooking. The cooked rice has thousand backs in the world of the well-done. The sacrificer has followed the tradition of his fifteen ancestors in cooking these rice-grains (11. 1. 19). Odana has thousand bodies and hundred streams in it. It is never exhausted. This Odana is the path leading to the gods (*devayāna*), going to the heaven (11. 1. 20). Odana is taken to the Vedī. It increases the progeny for the sacrificer and expels demons. It brings the wealth of cattle to the *yajamāna*. No witchcraft, nor diseases attack the sacrificer or his wife (11. 1. 22). Odana is taken out from the pot by means of a ladle which is the second hand of Aditi, and which the seven sages, the being-makers made. The ladle knows the limbs of Odana and collects them on the altar (11. 1. 24). This cooked Odana sits with the gods. This Odana is purified by Soma in the form of ghee and milk. It then occupies a place in the stomach of the Brāhmaṇas, who are Bhṛgvaṅgirovids[2] and who would not come to any grief by eating it (11. 1. 25). Odana is the king Soma. It is called upon not to intoxicate the Bhṛgvangirovids (11. 1. 26). The rice offered to the Brāhmaṇas is a cow yielding all desires (11. 1. 28). The husk of the rice grains is thrown in fire (11. 1. 29). This toiling or cooking, which is the same as pressing Soma leads the husband and wife, who offer this Sava, by the road going to the

[1] TS 6. 5. 6. 1. describes how Aditi with a desire to get sons performed this sacrifice and got four sons, the Ādityas. The term Sava is not found in the AV in the sense of offering. It means 'impiration of impulse'. It is used by Kauśika 60. 63, and by Sāyaṇa in his comment on 11. 1.

[2] See Sāyaṇa, on 11. 1. 25.

heaven, to the highest firmament (11. 1. 30). A pit is made in the remaining rice in a dish, and ghee is placed in it. It is allowed to spread on the members of Odana. This is the path leading to the heaven, the world of the Fathers (11. 1. 31). All non-Brāhmaṇas, who would like to eat this Odana, come to grief and no harm is done to the Brāhmaṇas, who eat it (11. 1. 32). Brahmaudana is thus a bull going to the heaven. It goes to the seers and their descendant who are Bhṛgvangirovids. Sitting in the world of the well-done, it actually prepares a path for the sacrificer (11. 1. 35). The gods went to the heaven by performing this rite (11. 1. 37).

In short, this Brahmaudana rite is a symbolical Soma sacrifice. Rice is the symbol of the Soma. Rice is deified like Soma. It has thousand parts. It is holy. All actions resulting in the cooking of the rice are deified. It is an effective means of securing heaven, the world of the Fathers and enjoying the life there after death. It is a simple rite and highly efficacious to bring about the highest fruit, the heaven.[1]

(2) SVARGAVDANA (12. 3).

This is also a Sava rite, performed by the husband, wife and children for securing the union of children and others in the heaven. This rite becomes fruitful after sixty years of the sacrificer's life. This is purely Atharvaṇic rite. Very few *ṛcs* of the hymn (12. 3). occur elsewhere.

The husband and wife prepare the cooke drice. This rice has hundred streams and is virtually the heaven. On account of its greatness it occupies both the heaven and the earth. It banishes the sin and impurity in the speech of the children (12. 3. 5). The sacrificers conquer both the firmaments, one of them is chiefly full of light and honey (12. 3. 6). Mortar, pestle and winnowing basket are kept ready, to be used in pounding and cleansing the rice grains. Wooden pestle is asked not to crush to pieces, the god-loving rice-grains, from which Odana is to be prepared (12. 3. 18). Rice grains are deified and every process to cleanse them is attached with some mysterious significance. The rice-grains owing to the process of pounding become expanded and ghee-backed. They are then placed in a winnowing basket to take away their chaff (12. 3. 19). The rice-grains lifted up in the process of winnowing meet the stalks of Soma in the sky and come back in the basket (12. 3. 20). The red chaff on the grains is removed and all grains become uniform in colour and appearance. The pressing stones cleanse the grains like clothes by means of a soapy substance. The operation of pounding and cleansing the rice-grains are identified with pressing and cleansing of Soma (12. 3. 20-21). Rice grains are poured in the water kept in earthen vessel on fire. Like a woman in her season seeing her husband, the

1 See also BLOOMFIELD SBE 42, p. 610.

waters are united with rice-grains. The waters make the rice-grains at the bottom of the vessel stand up and touch them on all sides (12. 3. 29). *Darbha* grass is brought and is scattered on the ground for the cooked rice, which the gods partake of. The earthen vessel is placed on the matting of the *darbhas.* The cooked rice is taken out in a dish with the help of a ladle and stirring stick. Ghee is poured on it. Gods are invited to enjoy the feast and invoked to utter the word '*hiṅg*,' at the sight of the rice, like a lowing cow on seeing the calf (12. 3. 36-37). The spreading of the cooked rice in the dish is a symbol of the wide heaven. The sacrificer would get the unequalled heaven, spread out. Gods reach the sacrificer to the deities (12. 3. 38). The surface of the rice is poured over with the streams of honey mixed with ghee. All these—rice, honey and ghee together, go to the heaven. They become the treasure-keeper for the sacrificing couple for sixty years after which the sacrificers, ending their life on this world, would go to the heaven to meet those offerings. None else can claim the offered rice till then. Deposited with these divisions, it goes to the three heavens. Fire is carried round Odana to protect it from the godless demons and *piśācas,* who eat flesh. The Ādityas and the Aṅgirasas wait on the oblations[1] (12. 3. 38, 41-43). To Ādityas and Āṅgirasas offering of honey mixed with ghee is given (12. 3. 44). Ghee is poured on the rice, which has some portion of it reserved for Āṅgirasas (12. 3. 45). The cooked rice is kept in the dish by the sacrificer and remains there as a deposit (12. 3. 48). This prevents death, prematurely coming from a man. The surface of Odana is covered with a piece of garment, worn by the sacrificer (12. 3. 51). After the death, the sacrificer goes to the heaven. Becoming all expanding and ghee-backed he goes to that world (12. 3. 53). The sacrificer going to the heaven becomes radiant changing the colour of his body (12. 3. 54). Deities like Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Viṣṇu, and Bṛhaspati guard Odana for sixty years, till the end of the life of the sacrificer.

Thus Odana is the deity of the Sava intended to get *svarga.* Here also the process of pounding and cleansing the grains of rice is identified with Soma-pressing. Thus this Sava is a symbolical Soma-sacrifice. Bringing water, cleansing the rice-grains, cooking, covering with ghee and honey, circumambulating round fire, placing golden *dakṣiṇā* and clothing on it are the main acts in this Sava rite. It is a simple rite having an effect of a Soma-sacrifice.

[1] *PPP* reads *adityā no aṅgirasāḥ* for *ādityā enamaṅgirasaḥ.* It is to be noted that in this rite the Aṅgirasas wait on the offering for sixty years, after which the sacrificing couple meets it in heaven. Aṅgirasas and Ādityas are the custodians of that treasure.

### (3) Catuśśarāva Sava (1. 31).

An offering[1] on four pot-sherds is offered to the divine guardians of the quarters called Āśāpālas. The four immortal guardians of the four quarters, who are also the Superintendents of the creatures, are given an offering of cooked rice. The deities, Āśāpālas do not occur elsewhere. The respective specific deities of the quarters are not referred to in the hymn. These four Āśāpālas are the immortals, the gods. They free the sacrificer from the snares of Nirṛti (deity of destruction) and from distress. Ghee and rice are offered by the sacrificer, who is enjoying full compliment of his body. The god in the fourth quarter, Kubera[2] among the four Āśāpālas is praised to bring welfare. Also well-being to the father, mother, cows, creatures and men is sought along with the long life for the sacrificer (1. 31. 1-4).

### (4) Avisava (3. 29).

The deity of this Sava (3. 29) is a goat with white feet. Five cakes of the cooked rice are kept on the four feet and navel of the killed goat.[3]

The offering of a white-footed goat frees the sacrificer from the one-sixteenths part of the offerings, given in the sacrifice and outside the sacrifice (*iṣṭāpūrta*), which is collected as a tax by the councillors of Yama and which is divided among themselves. The goat is unexhausted in the heaven, for it satisfies each desire which arises in the mind of the sacrificer. A white-footed goat, when given in sacrifice here, enables the sacrificer to secure the heaven, where he becomes strong and no tax is required to be given by the weak to the stronger. The goat with the five cakes is as big as the world beyond. The goat secures the world of the Fathers, the sun and the moon unexhausted to the sacrificer (3. 29. 1-5).

### (5) Adjaudana Sava (4. 14).

A goat is killed and offered in this Sava. The goat thus killed is the deity. Aja is born of the heat of Agni. Through Aja, the gods attained godhood, and the holy ones ascended the heights. By the offering of Aja in the sacrifice the sacrificer holding the fire in his hand for light ascends to the heaven, sits mixed with the gods, and ultimately becomes identified with the sun (4. 14. 1-3). The Goat is the divine eagle (4. 14. 6). Rice grains are cooked and divided into five parts. The flesh of the different parts of the Goat

[1] Kauśika 64 gives the details of the Sava. In this a goat is killed and offered to the deities. The hymn does not specify the creature of the offering. Sāyaṇa on 1. 31. 1. points out that the offering is of cooked rice.

[2] See Sāyaṇa on 1. 31. 3.

[3] See Sāyaṇa, introduction to 3. 29. and also 3. 28. 4. This hymn does not occur anywhere else.

with the parts of the rice are kept in five different directions. All parts of the Goat are covered in its skin. It then becomes possessed of all limbs and universal in form. The Goat rises up from this world and standing erect on four feet goes to the highest world (4. 14. 7-9).

(6) BRAHMĀSYAUDANA (4. 34).

An expanded offering of cooked rice with channels of juices, wine, water and plants tucked in it is called Viṣṭhārin. The Odana is deified. It enables the sacrificer to go to the heaven and enjoy all pleasures there. The Odana is born of the Brahman's mouth. Hence it is called the Brahmāsyaudana. It is produced from *tapas* (penance). The Brahman is its head, *bṛhat sāman* is its back, *vāmadevya sāman* is its stomach, its two sides are the metres, the Truth is its mouth. Thus the Viṣṭhārin sacrifice, consisting of rice cooked with milk, is accompanied by the *brahman*, songs of praise and metres and the truth. It thus possesses divine power. The sacrificers of this Yajña go to the heaven, boneless, cleansed and with the generative organ. The offering leads the sacrificer to the world of the gods, Yama and Gandharvas. This is the strongest of all Sava-sacrifices. With whatsoever desire one wants to enjoy the life in the heaven, he pours all those articles on the Odana, which is charged to lead the sacrificer to the heaven. Ghee, honey, wine, water, milk and curds are poured on the surface of the Odana. Four jars are filled with milk, water and curds. This Odana is winning the worlds and is offered to the Brāhmaṇas. The Odana is an omnipotent and desire yielding cow (4. 34. 1-8).

(7) ATIMṚTYU SAVA (4. 35).

Rice is cooked and given to the Brāhmaṇas. This Odana has capacity to overpass death. It is called 'Sava which takes across death' (*atimṛtyu*). This Odana, when cooked, is the generator of Amṛta, the immortal being. It is the lord of the Gāyatri and as a matter of fact of all metres. All Vedas are deposited in the Odana (4. 35. 6). He became the creator. He gave breath to all beings and himself possessed them. All worlds rich in ghee flowed from him. All luminous quarters are for him (4. 35. 5). The Odana supported the all nourishing earth, filled the mid-air with juice, uplifted and established the heaven with greatness (4. 35. 3). The Odana fashioned the year with twelve months and month with thirty days. The revolving days and nights do not encompass the Odana (4. 35. 4). This Odana was cooked formerly by the Brahman for the Brahman. The being-makers[1] overcame death by means of this Odana, cooked with milk. They obtained this with labour and penance. Prajāpati,

[1] These are the *bhūtakṛts*. They are the seven sages, viz., Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, Bhāradvāja, Gautama, Atri, Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa. These are quoted by Sāyaṇa on 4. 11. 9.

the born first of *rta*, with penance cooked this Odana for the Brahman. He is the centre, support and goal of all worlds (4. 35. 1).

Thus Odana, the rice cooked with milk, is elevated to the dignity and function of the Highest Creator. It is offered to the Brāhmaṇas for overcoming death.

### (8) Karki Sava (4. 38. 5-7).

Karkī is a white calf. Karkī and a cow to be killed in a sacrifice are to be given to a Brāhmaṇa according to Kauśika (66. 13). Ṛṣabha or a bull is praised as the sun who goes at once defending all worlds. He is invoked to come with *antarikṣa* (mid-air), to defend the Karkī, which belongs to him and to drink the drops of Soma (4. 38. 5-6).[1] Fodder is given in the mouth of the Karkī in the cow-stall (4. 38. 7). The sun brings the cattle safe to the home, to the cow-stall. Hence he might have been praised here.[2] But the traditional interpretation of these verses, as suggested by Kauśika (66. 13) indicates that Karkī and a cow are tied to a rope having twelve knots. Ṛṣabha or the sun is the master of the cows, which are given to the Brāhmaṇas, who possess them now.

### (9) Anaḍuh Sava (4. 11).

Anaḍuh is the Bull or Dharma in the form of a Bull.[3] He is glorified as the creator of all existence and is identified with Indra. The Bull sustains the earth, sky, atmosphere and six directions. He entered into the whole world (4. 11. 1). The Bull is Indra.[4] He looks at all cattle. Like Indra, the mighty Bull measures out three paths.[5] He yields all things in the past, present and future. He follows the course of gods other than Indra (4. 11. 2). He is also like the heated caldron containing milk.[*] As the Bull, who is Indra, is born on the earth, and the milk is also from the produce of his females, he and Indra are identified with the caldron (4. 11. 3). Pavamāna, the Soma swells the milk, which Anaḍuh milks in the world of the blessed. Parjanya is the stream. The Maruts are his udder. Sacrifice is the milk, and the gifts given at the sacrifice are the process of milking. Thus the Bull is Indra, who with the help of Parajanya and Maruts sends down fertility, which is seen in the form of sacrifice (4. 11. 4). Anaḍuh is conquering all, supporting all and effecting all. He is the *gharma* having four feet. None can rule over him. Neither sacrifice, nor sacrificer, nor giver nor receiver of gifts can command him. He is over and above all (4. 11. 5). By means

1 For the relation of verses 5-7 with 1-4 in 4. 38. see Bloomfield *SBE* 32, pp. 412-14.

2 See Bloomfield, loc. cit.

3 See Sāyaṇa, on 4. 11. 1.

4 *PPP* reads *indrasya* for *indraḥ sa*. According to *PPP* the meaning would be 'The Bull belongs to Indra'.

5 These are on the earth, in the atmosphere and heaven.

of this Anaḍuh, the gods went to the heaven, the navel of immortality, by abandoning their bodies. So men also, like the gods, by the sacrifice of Anaḍuh can hope to reach heaven (4. 11. 6). He is also identified with various deities. He is Indra by form.[1] He is Agni on account of carrying yoke and consequently he is like Vaisvānara, who is Parameṣthin, Prajāpati and Virāj (4. 11. 7). The seven sages[2] know the seven milkings of the Bull (4. 11. 9).

Thus the Bull is Indra, Agni, Prajāpati and many other prominent gods. He is the sun looking like the caldron. Gods attained divinity through him, before that they were just mortals. He is the creator.

Finally the Bull is to be killed. Knowing the greatness of this Bull, one should partake of this Bull and he is freed from this worldly existence[3] (4. 11. 3).

(10) AND (11) PṚṢNI AND PṚṢNIGAU (6. 31, 7. 22).

A spotted cow is offered in this Pṛṣṇi Sava (6. 31). The cow is the sun in the east, at the time of rising. He goes to the sky and the mid-air, and occupies all worlds with his rays (6. 31. 1). He is also the cause of the existence of all creatures by bearing their vital breaths (6. 31. 2). He rules over thirty domains.[4] Vāk, the bird has set him up to meet the day with the lights of morning (6. 31. 3).

Pṛṣnigau is the sun (7. 22).[5] The sun is a thousand times brighter for our seeing, thought of the poets and the light (7. 22. 1). He inspired the dawns like the cows in a stall (7. 22. 2).

Kauśika (66. 14) points out that these hymns refer to the Sava of cows. We find in the latter hymn only a faint reference to the cow. The hymn deals with the sun, hence the sun might have been identified with cow.

(12) ṚṢABHA (9. 4).

**Ṛṣabha is offered by the Brāhmaṇas in a sacrifice. The Bull is thousandfold in strength, rich in milk, and bearing all forms in his**

[1] *PPP* reads '*balena*'. He is Indra on account of his strength. [2] See p. 337.

The seven milkings are explained by Sāyaṇa as seven classes of all plants or seven worlds. The word does not seem to specify as particular number, but a great number.

[3] This is based on the reading which Sāyaṇa has before him in 4. 11. 3d. '*yo nosnīyāt*', the *Aundh edition*, also *S. P. Pandit's* edition read '*yo nāsnīyat*' with this reading the sense is just the reverse. But the bull is offered in the Sava. Hence the reading before Sāyaṇa seems to be correct.

[4] Sāyaṇa understands by the *trinśat dhāmā* as the thirty *muhūrtas* of the day and night. WHITNEY rightly refers to thirty days of a lunar month. LUDWIG explains the expression as thirty gods. However the number thirty may refer to a large numbe. of worlds, conceived by the poets. The hymn is also found at RV X. 189. 1-3.

[5] This short hymn of two verses is obscure. Sāyaṇa refers this hymn to Sūrya HENRY refers to Yama. GRIFFITH refers this hymn to Savitṛ, or Yama with some of Savitṛ's attributes. *PPP* reads in 1a *ā na ṛṣis* and *aditir* for *matir*. According to *PPP* it would mean 'This Sun is the seer worthy of thousand seers'.

stomach. He brings all excellence to the giver the sacrificer (9. 4. 1). He became in the beginning the counterpart of the waters, the overpowering lord like the earth, father of the calves and the lord of the cows (9. 4. 2). He is male, yet bears children and is rich in milk (9. 4. 3). He conceives and gives forth embryonic calf, fresh milk, curd and ghee, which is his semen (9. 4. 4). He drinks Soma (9. 4. 5). He is the generator of cattle and shaper of all forms (9. 4. 6).

He belongs to Bṛhaspati (9. 4. 1). He is offered in a sacrifice to Indra and Jātavedas. Agni leads him by the roads travelled by the gods (9. 4. 3). His seed is ghee, which is offered in the sacrifice and which brings a thousandfold prosperity. He is clothed in the form of Indra (9. 4. 7).

Different deities go to make up his body. Different deities preside over different parts of his body. When sacrificed, the different parts go to those respective deities.

He has Indra's force, two arms of Varuṇa, two shoulders of Aśvins and hump of the Maruts. The wise poets call him Bṛhaspati collected together. Thus these gods go to form his body (9. 4. 8). He is called Indra and Sarasvat. His offering in the sacrifice is equal to the gift of a thousand uniformly faced cows to Brāhmaṇa (9. 4. 9). Bṛhaspati and Savitṛ bestow vigour. Tvaṣṭṛ and Vāyu prepare his soul. He goes boasting among the cows like Indra among the gods.

Anumati is his sides. Bhaga is his rib-pieces. Mitra wholly possesses his knees (9. 4. 12). Ādityas claim his hinder part. Bṛhaspati claims his two thighs. His tail belongs to divine wind. His inner parts belongs to Sinīvālī. His skin belonged to Sūryā. His breast belongs to Jāmiśansa. Soma claims his vessels. Thus all these gods claim the different limbs of the Bull. Naturally when the Bull is killed in the sacrifice and offered therein, these parts go to different deities (9. 4. 13-15). The parts of the body which cannot be eaten, were given to different creatures. The scraps of his feat were given to Saramā, hoop to the tortoises and the contents of his bowel were given to worms (9. 4. 16).

The Bull possesses wonderful powers. With his horns he pierces the demons. With his eyes he banishes famine. His ears hear what is auspicious (9. 4. 17). The Bull, offered in the sacrifice offers a hundredfold sacrifice. The fires do not burn him. Gods promote the Brāhmaṇa, who offers Bull in sacrifice (9. 4. 19).

The Brāhmaṇa, who offers Bull, who is Indra in fact, bestows prosperity in wealth, cows, lifelime and progeny (9. 4. 21-22).

Thus Ṛṣabha is Indra. He belongs to Bṛhaspati (a representative of the priests). All prominent deities claim the different parts of his body, which is made up of from a number of deities. Ṛṣabha offered in sacrifice brings all kinds of prosperity.

(13) PAÑCAUDANA AJA (9. 5).

A goat is offered with five rice-dishes in this Sava rite. Aja is Agni. He is light (9. 5. 7). He is born of Agni (9. 5. 6). He is also unborn, going to the heaven. By him the Āṅgirasas knew the pure world (9. 5. 16). Aja (Goat or the unborn one) in the beginning marched on this world. This earth became his breast, sky his back, atmosphere his waist, quarters his sides and the two oceans his sides. *Ṛta* and Truth became his eyes; all truth and faith became its breath. Virāj was his head (9. 5. 20-21). The offerings of Goat with five rice-dishes are the seasons like torrid, making, gathering, fattening and burn the fortune of the enemy of the person, who offers this sacrifice and thrives himself (9. 5. 31-36).

The Goat is thus a divine being and is brought to be killed in the sacrifice. His feet are washed clean. His skin is cut with a dark coloured knife and he is separated joint by joint. All these parts are kept on the fire in a jar full of water. The dismembered Aja, who is unborn and hence cannot die by this sacrificial killing, with the accompaniment of the five rice-dishes crosses the great darkness variously and steps in the third firmament (9. 5. 1, 3-5). The Goat goes to the heaven and keeps there ready, a place for the sacrificer after his death. He becomes thus a cow, all-formed and yielding all desires (9. 5. 10). The husband unites with his wife in the next world (9. 5. 27).

(14) A BULL[1] (9. 7).

The Bull is also deified in another Anadutsava (9. 7). Different limbs of the sacrificial Bull are identified with various deities. Thus the sacrificial Bull becomes a deity. The poet concludes that the Bull is of universal form, every form and bovine form (9. 7. 25). The poet rallies all gods in identifying the various forms of the Bull with them. His two horns are Prajāpati and Parameṣṭhin. Indra is his head. Agni is his forehead. Yama is the joint of his neck (9. 7. 1). Soma is his brain. Dyaus and Pṛthivī are his two jaws. Vidyut is his tongue. Maruts are his teeth. Revatī and Kṛttikā are his neck and shoulders respectively. *Gharma* is the portion of the neck on which yoke rests. His universe is Vāyu. His heaven is *kṛṣṇadra*[2] (9. 7. 4). *Śyena*[3] is his breast. Atmosphere is his belly. Bṛhaspati is his hump. *Bṛhatis* are his breast bones. The wives of the gods are his side bones. The attendants are his ribs. Mitra and Varuṇa are his two shoulders. Tvaṣṭṛ and Aryaman are his shanks, and Mahādeva is his fore legs (9. 7. 7). Indrāṇī is his buttock.

[1] It may be a bull or a cow.

[2] An obscure word. Comment of Sāyaṇa is not available on this hymn. GRIFFITH and WHITNEY leave the word without translating it. The *pādapātha* separates *kṛṣṇa* and *dra*. Hence WHITNEY conjectures it to mean black-runner. Dr. RAGHU VIRA's text reads the word as it is.

[3] It is a bird or a sacrifice.

Vāyu is his tail. Soma is his hair. The Brahman and Kṣatra are his two hips and force is his thighs. Dhātṛ and Savitṛ are his knee joints. The Gandharvas are his legs. The Apsarasas are his dew-claws. Aditi is his hoof. Thought is his heart. Wisdom is his liver and ceremony is his vein, *purītat* (9. 7. 11). The stream is his womb. The rain is his teats. Thunder is his udder. His hide is all expansive. His hair are the herbs. His form is the lunar mansions. The god-folk are his intestines. Men are his bowels and demons are his abdomen (9. 7. 11-16). He is Agnī when sitting; the two Aśvins when standing up; Indra when standing eastwards; Yama when standing westwards and Savitṛ when standing northwards. He is king Soma when he obtains grass. He is Mitra when he is looking. He belongs to all gods, when he is being yoked, to Prajāpati when yoked and he is everything when released (9. 7. 18-24).

He is thus very minutely described. There is a regular order in his description. He is identified in his various parts with about thirty-two prominent deities, with Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas, gods and demons. The only aim of the poet in giving this random identification is to compare different parts of the sacrificial Bull and point out as to how many deities reside in the body of the Bull. Ultimately the poet concludes that all forms of the cattle come to him, who knows the omnipresence of the Bull. This Bull is given away to a Brāhmaṇa.

### (15) ŚĀLĀ (9. 3).

A house is given to a Brāhmaṇa. While giving it over, it is dismantled. It can be carried, wherever the receiver desires to take it, or he may continue to live therein (9. 3. 24). It is not a toy house as WHITNEY[1] wants to suggest, but rather a temporary shed built with leaves, bamboo and grass, which can be dismantled and carried elsewhere, like a modern tent. This Śālā is deified.

Śālā is possessed of all chosen things (9. 3. 2). With the help of Indra, the parts of the house are separated (9. 3. 2). Śālā has been described as the auspicious mistress presiding over the house (9. 3. 6). The Divine Śālā *(devī śālā)* is the store of Soma, hall of Agni, chamber for the ladies and the seat of gods (9. 3. 7). The most exalted Prajāpati fashioned Śālā for progeny (9. 3. 11). The Brahman and the Kavis fashioned the House (9. 3. 19). Varuṇa closes the doors of Śālā in the night and Mitra opens them in the morning (9. 3. 18). Indra and Agni are invoked to defend the Śālā which is the seat of Soma (9. 3. 19). In the dwelling having two, four, six, eight or ten sides, Agni lies like an embryo (9. 3. 21). She is prayed to grant long life to the giver and receiver of the Śālā (9. 3. 9), and to be rich in progeny (9. 3. 13), food and milk (9. 3. 16). Within Śālā are fire and water, which are the doors of *ṛta* (9. 3. 22). To the greatness of Śālā, homage is paid (9. 3. 25-31).

[1] AV on 9. 3. 1.

Thus Śālā is a deity, protecting the life and property of the householder. This Śālā can be removed anywhere, built as it is from the bamboos, grass, rushes and leaves. It has got several apartments which are required in the performance of a sacrifice, such as *havirdhāna*, *agniśāla*, wives' chamber, *sadas*, and a chamber for the gods (9. 3. 7). It thus seems that the offering of such a Śālā to a Brāhmaṇa is reminiscence of a sacrifice. The apartments, which are normally constructed in a sacrifice are offered to a Brāhmaṇa.

### (16) A COW WITH HUNDRED RICE-DISHES (10. 9).

A cow is killed and is offered along with hundred rice-dishes to a Brāhmaṇa. The offering of such cow and rice-dishes is superior to the offering of Agniṣṭoma and Atirātra sacrifices (10. 9. 8-9). Indra first gave this offering of a cow, which brings welfare to the sacrificer and destroyer of his enemies (10. 9. 1). The mouth of the cow is bound by the priest before it is killed. The cow is killed with the pressing stone. When killed, the cow becomes the holy mother. Its skin becomes the *vedi* (altar) and hair, the *barhis*. The hair of the tail of the cow become the sprinkling and its tongue becomes the cleansing matter. Thus becoming clean, the cow with hundred rich-dishes goes to the heaven (10. 9. 2-3). The offerer of such offering goes to the heaven and wins for him those worlds, which are heavenly and earthly (10. 9. 6). The killers of the cow guard it. Also the Vasus, Maruts and Adityas protect the cow from the right, left and behind, respectively. The gods, the Fathers, men, Gandharvas and Apsarasas also guard the cow (10. 9. 8-9). The cow yields to the gods, stationed in the heaven, mid-air and on the earth, milk, butter and honey (10. 9. 12). The head, mouth and various parts of the body the cow thus offered yield to the sacrificer curd, milk, butter and honey (10. 9. 13-24).

Rice grains are cooked in milk and divided into hundred parts. These are offered along with the cow, hence the offering is called *Śataudanā gauḥ*. The cow thus becomes a divine being, going to the heaven and yielding even to the gods all prosperity.

### (17) A BARREN COW (VAŚĀ, 10. 10).

A cow killed and offered in the sacrifice, not only becomes a holy being, but becomes a deity and resides in the heaven. Vaśā is a barren cow, which is to be offered to a Brāhmaṇa. Vaśā is deified.

The cow protects the sky, earth and waters (10. 10. 4). She is the head of the sacrifice and is possessed of a thousand streams. She has got Soma in her (10. 10. 3). Gods breathe in her (10. 10. 5). Her feet are the sacrifice; her milk is the food and her breath is *svadhā*. She is the wife of Parjanya and her breasts are lightning. Agni and Soma entered in her. She yields water, rich lands, kingdom, food and milk (10. 10. 7-8). Here Vaśā is conceived as the

deity of rain fertilizing the earth. The righteous one, Vaśā, was called by the Ādityas, when Indra made her drink a thousand vessels of Soma. The Bull (Vṛtra) called Vaśā, hence Indra got angry and took away all her milk, which was Soma and which was kept in three vessels in the firmament. Vaśā took back the Soma kept in vessels, when Atharvan, consecrated sat on the golden *barhis*. Vaśā thus being united with Soma became superior to the Gandharvas, Kalis and the ocean. She was also united with Vāta and all winged creatures. She ruled and danced over the Ṛcs and Sāmans. The auspicious one was united with Sūrya and the sight bearing all excellent lustre. The righteous one stood decorated with gold when Samudra, becoming a horse mounted her. At this time, when all auspicious ones were united with her, who was Deṣṭrī, the Divine Instructress and Svadhā, Atharvan the consecrated priest sat on the golden *barhis* (10. 10. 9-17).

Vaśā is Immortality. People worship her as Yama. Vaśā is all gods, men, Asuras, Fathers and seers (10. 10. 26). *Ṛta* is set in her, as also the *brahman* and penance (10. 10. 33). She became all universe. All that Sūrya sees is she (10. 10. 34). From the hump of the *brahman* a drop went up. From that she was born. She is thus born of the *brahman* (10. 10. 19). She is the mother of the Kṣatriyas and *svadhā*, the food of the Pitṛs. From her were born the weapons[1] and thought (10. 10. 18). From her mouth came the *gāthās* (songs), from nape-bones came strength. From her belly sacrifice was born and from her breasts the rays (10. 10. 20). Plants were born of the stomach of the cow (10. 10. 21).

Vaśā entered into the belly of Varuṇa. Brahmā priest called her up from that place. When she came out all were afraid of her (10. 10. 23).

Vaśā is the all-footed sacrifice. She yields milk to the giver (of Vaśā) abundant milk (10. 10. 27). Her seed became fourfold—waters, *amṛta*, sacrifice and creatures each one quarter (10. 10. 29).

Vaśā is omnipresent. She is Dyaus, Pṛthivī, Viṣṇu and Prajāpati. Vasus and Sādhyas drink the milk of Vaśā and worship it (10. 10. 31).

Some milk her for Soma and some for ghee.

Those who offer Vaśā reach the heaven (10. 10. 32).

Thus Vaśā is a deity. She creates all worlds and is omnipresent. All deities reside in her. Atharvan, the divine seer was present at the divine sacrifice when Soma, the milk of Vaśā was offered. This speaks of the intimate connection between Atharvan and the sacrifice and gift of Vaśā. When sacrificed, she becomes an omnipotent deity and when offered as a gift to a Brāhmaṇa, she reaches him to the highest heaven.

[1] WHITNEY amends the text *yajñe* into the *jajñe*. Even without emendation the sense is clear, '*yajña* was the missile of Vaśā.'

(18) Vaśā Gauḥ (a barren cow 12. 4).

Vaśā gauḥ, a barren cow should be allowed to stay in the cow-stall for three years. After this period she must be given away to a Brāhmaṇa, on whom she showers blessings. If she is still retained in the house or killed in the house, all calamities fall on the householder (12. 4. 16).

Vaśā is the cow of the gods (12. 4. 2). She is born with the Brāhmaṇas for the gods (12. 4. 10). She is a deposited treasure of the Brāhmaṇas (12. 4. 14). Gods ask her through the mouth of the Brāhmaṇas (12. 4. 20). Nārada with full knowledge, together with gods drove her away as his own[1] (12. 4. 24). The cow, being charged with divine power is capable of destroying the cattle and descendants of the person, who does not give her to the Brāhmaṇas when asked for (12. 4. 25). The Brāhmaṇas really speaking ask her for Agni, Soma, Kāma, Mitra and Varuṇa (12. 4. 26).

The cow, who is the deposited treasure of the gods, after three years stay in the house of her owner, desires to go to her place. She manifests herself, when she desires to go. She produces desire in the mind the Brāhmaṇas to ask the householder about the cow. She has communications with gods, who invite the Brāhmaṇas to ask for her (12. 4. 29-31).

The giver of the cow gets all his desires in the realm of Yama, and when the cow has been denied when asked for, the world called Nāraka comes to him (12. 4. 36). She milks poison for him, who refuses her (12. 4. 39).

From the sacrifice the gods shaped out the Vaśā cows. Out of them Nārada selected one horrible cow, by name, Viliptī.[2] The gods were not sure whether she was Vaśā or not. So Nārada told them that she was the best of the Vaśās (Vaśātamā) Bṛhaspati asked Nārada about the varieties of Vaśās. Nārada replied that there were three Vaśā cows, viz., Viliptyā, her mother[3] and Vaśā (12. 4. 41-47).

Bheda[4] did not give Vaśā to Indra, who asked for her. As a punishment the gods cut off all his chances of winning superiority (12. 4. 50).

Vaśā is the mother of the Rājanya, the Kṣatriyas. In the begining only, she was ordered to be so (12. 4. 33). By giving Vaśā to the Brāhmaṇas, Rājanya does not incur the wrath of his mother (12. 4. 32).

Thus Vaśā is an ordinary cow, but if she remains barren for three years, she must not be kept at home, but must be given to the

[1] This interpretation is based on Ludwig's emendation of *vidyāt* into *vidvān*.
[2] *PPP* reads *vilapatim* 'lamenting'. Vilaptī means anointed or besmeared.
[3] Who remains barren after giving birth to one calf.
[4] Macdonell and Keith, Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 111, point out that he was irreligious and leader of the non-Aryan folks.

Brāhmaṇas. She is claimed to have divine mind, by which she communicates her desire to quit her house to the gods. Kṣtriya is a child of Vaśā, who is of three kinds. The mention of Nārada, a sage, is seen for the first time in the AV. All this deification and glorification is for giving gift of a barren cow to the Brāhmaṇas, who may kill her and offer in sacrifice.

### (19) ODANA OR RICE-DISH (11. 3).

Odana, the cooked rice is deified. It is a personified divine being. All deities form the different limbs of the personified rice. Bṛhaspati is the head of the Odana and the Brahman is its mouth. The heaven and earth form its ears. Sūrya and Candramas are its eyes. Odana is a living being. The seven sages are its Prāṇa and Apāna. The mortar and pestle required for pounding the rice grains are its sight and desire respectively. The winnowing basket is Diti, and Aditi holds it. Vāta sifts the rice grains. The whole living and non-living world is symbolised in Odana. All iron and copper are the flesh and blood of Odana. The ashes, remaining after cooking the rice form tin. Its conplexion is gold. Its smell is like blue lotus. The thrashing floor is the receptacle. Its shoulders are the two *sphyas*.[1] The ear-shafts are its spines. Its entrails are the tethers and its intestines are the leather straps. Thus right from the time the seed of rice grows up in the fields due to rain, till it is cooked and placed in a plate, all functions are symbolized for its glorification (11. 3. 1-10).

Odana is thus the symbol of the energy and life of the things, living and non-living on this earth.

In the jar of Pṛthivī the rice grains are boiled and the heaven is the lid of the jar (11. 3. 11). Ṛc, Saman, Yaju and Atharva Vedas carry on the process of boiling (11. 3. 14-15). Bṛhat and Rathantara *sāmans* form the stirring stick and ladle respectively (31. 3. 16). A plate of five holes is used for taking the rice (11. 3. 18). By the offering of such Odana to the Brāhmaṇas, all worlds, which are obtained by the performance of *yajñas*[2] are secured (11. 3. 19). In the Odana reside the ocean, heaven and earth[3] (11. 3. 20) and in the portion remaining after offering the rice (*ucchiṣṭa*) six times eighty gods (four hundred eighty, 11. 3. 21).[4]

Odana is not the ordinary rice. It is the Great Creator containing both the subject and object of the action of cooking (11. 3. 31).

[1] Sāyaṇa explains this term as the part of a cart. WHITNEY translates it as 'splints'. GRIFFITH renders it as 'wooden swords', which form the sacrificial impliments. See 11. 3. 9.

[2] The emendation accepted by WHITNEY, viz., *yajñavatas for yajñavacas* is unnecessary.

[3] The rain water comes from the ocean, goes to the sky and fertilize the earth, which produces the rice-grains.

[4] See 11. 7.

Odana has all limbs, joints and body complete in itself (11. 3. 32). It is thus universal and Omnipotent cause, which maintains the whole world.

Odana is the support of the lord, who is the basis of the universe (11. 3. 50). Prajāpati fashioned thirty-three worlds[1] out of this Odana (11. 5. 52). He created the sacrifice for the knowledge of the worlds (11. 3. 53).

The Paippalada Śākhā-version of this hymn[2] (11. 3), contains more discussion on the theological interpretation of the eating of Odana.

Odana thus, is the personified, deified and elevated material cause of the universe.

(20) PAVITRA SAVA (6. 19).

Kṛsara is the rice cooked with sesame. It is offered to the Brāhmaṇas for the sake of purification. Savitṛ is called upon to purify the giver by his impulse (*sava*) and purificatory powers (6. 19. 3).[3]

(21) PAUNAḤŚILA SAVA (6. 30).

Honey mixed with barley is given to the Brāhmaṇas. The gods ploughed on the bank of Sarasvatī, barley mixed with honey for Manu. Indra was the lord of the furrows and the Maruts were the ploughmen. The barley thus produced is mixed with honey and is deified. It is given to the Brāhmaṇas.[4]

(22) URVARĀ SAVA (7. 104).

A cultivated field is given to a Brāhmaṇa. It is compared with cow rich in milk and having constant calf. It was given by Varuṇa to Atharvan.

Thus in all Sava sacrifices some gift is given to the Brāhmaṇas. The gift thus given is deified and glorified as the mighty divinity, which brings the heaven to the giver. The gifts consist of objects such as rice, rice and sesame, house and cultivated field or animals like cow, bull and goat. The process of offering is less elaborate than the regular sacrifice, but the fruit of the offering is equal or more efficacious than that of the sacrifice. These gifts are all given to secure *svarga* or the highest heaven, the world of Light. To glorify and popularize this new technique of short and effective Savās, the Atharvaṇic poets glorified the gifts and elevated to the level of the highest divinities.

It is also interesting to see how the Atharvaṇic poet has elevated the remaining part of the brahmaudana offering.

[1] The worlds are thirty-three, which are occupied by the thirty-three gods, viz. eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Ādityas, Prajāpati and Vaṣaṭ. Cf. AB 1. 10.

[2] Cf. The AV edited by DR. RAGHU VIRA, hymns 16. 53-58.

[3] Kauśika 66. 16 informs about this Sava. Though the text does not warrant the use of Kṛsara.

[4] See Kauśika 66. 15.

### (23) Ucchiṣṭa (11. 7).

Ucchiṣṭa is the remnant of the Brahmaudana offering.[1] It is turned into the highest cause of the universe, in which everything resides. Ucchiṣṭa is the basis of all existence. All things in the universe bearing name and form, being and non-being (*sat* and *asat*) are set in the remnant (11. 7. 1-3). Whatever breathes and sees is produced from it (11. 7. 23). Indra, Agni, heaven and earth, water, ocean, the moon and wind, Mṛtyu, Prajāpati are set in the remnant (11. 7. 1-3). Sūrya shines in it. The day and night reside in it. Nine earths, oceans and skies are set in it (11. 7. 14). He is the father of all existence, which breathes (11. 7. 16). The gods, in heaven, the Fathers, human beings, Gandharvas and Apsarasas are born of it (11. 7. 23, 27).

The remnant is the source of the Vedas and sacrifices. Ṛc, Sāman and Yaju are produced from it (11. 7. 5). All parts of the Sāman are in it. The Sāmans such as Aindrāgna, Pāvamāna, Mahānāmnī and Mahāvrata are in it (11. 7. 6).[2] All major sacrifices are in it. They are: Rājasūya, Vājapeya, Agniṣṭoma, Arka or Cayana, Aśvamedha, Satras, Agnihotra, Ekarātra, Dvirātra, Sadyaskri, Prakri, Ukthya, Caturātra, Pañcarātra, Ṣoḍaśī, Saptarātra, Viśvajit, Abhijit, Atirātra, Sāhna, and Dvādaśāha. All those which are once set in the immortality are fixed in it. Also those sacrifices, which are out of practice, being very elaborate and costly are in it (11. 7. 6-12).

Immortality, power, kingship, and success, are all set in it (11. 7. 18). Delights, joys, enjoyments and all those who enjoy are also set in it (11. 7. 26).

Thus the remnant of the Brahmaudana Sava, as Sāyaṇa points out, or of any sacrifice is cooked offering. It is the origin of all existence on the earth and the Creator of the universe. The traditional poet Atharvan thus shows that sacrifice or even the remnant of the sacrifice creates and maintains the universe. All Vedas and sacrifices are the outcome of the remnant. The idea behind this deification and glorification of the remnant, seems to be to give impetus to the Sava-form of sacrifices, which are simpler and less costly and which are purely Atharvaṇic in origin.

### (24) Aṣṭakā (3. 10).

Aṣṭakā is another Atharvaṇic sacrificial deity. It represents the 8th day after the full moon. Ekaṣṭaka is the 8th day in the dark half

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 11. 7. 1. He quotes from TB 1. 1. 9. 1 to show how the remnant of the Brahmaudana offering, when eaten by Aditi, produced Dhātṛ and Aryaman. He points out that in the AV, food, or Odana is treated as the cause of the universes Cf. *Muṇḍaka* 1. 1. 8.

[2] Mahānāmni is also called Śākvara Sāman. Mahāvrata is a group of five Sāmans. such as Rājana, Gāyatra, Bṛhat, Rathantara, and Bhadra. See Sāyaṇa ibid.

of the month of Māgha.[1] This rite contains twenty-one offerings.[2] It is rite in honour of the Fathers.[3] The day marked the beginning of the new year and the end of the last year. The Aṣṭaka or Ekaṣṭakā is deified.

She is the daughter of Prajāpati (3. 10. 13). She is the first dawn. She becomes a cow in the house of Yama (3. 10. 1). She is the wife of the new year (3. 10. 8). She is also the wife of the gods. The gods are rejoiced to see the Aṣṭakā, as a cow approaching on the eve of the new year. She (the eve of the new year) is the model of the new year. The Aṣṭakā moves among others as a firmly established deity. Great powers and glories are in her (3. 10. 2-4). The great god Indra is born of her. Indra on account of her penance, overcame Vṛtra. Her other son is Soma (3. 10. 12-13). She is invoked to grant wealth, progeny and abundance of food.

The basis of deification is the day of the new year. She is thus the wife of the new year and also of gods. A prayer to the first day of the new year is offered to bring plenty of wealth, progeny and food.

## XI

In this chapter I have described the demons and the evil spirits in the AV. The demons or the evil spirits are by their very nature malignant and hostile creatures. Their purpose is to harass men and women, to cause diseases or to feed upon the raw flesh. They possess tremendous power, which ordinarily cannot be overcome without the help of the Atharvaṇic spells. These spells of the Atharvaṇic priests expose them and immediately make them declare themselves. They carry on their activities in darkness and in concealed ways. The Atharvaṇic priest exposes them and brings them under his control. He kills them or compels them to go elsewhere. The poet boasts that all *piśācas* in the village run away as soon as the Atharvaṇic priest enters it.

### (1) Atrins

These are the greedy demons. They rise in troops at the time of night on the new moon day (1. 16. 1). Agni, Mitra and Varuṇa drive them off with flames (6. 32. 3). Indra and Soma pierce them (8. 1. 1-5). Agni knows the races of these secret greedy creatures (1. 8. 4). The amulet of lead overcomes the Atrins (1. 16. 3). The amulets of *jaṅgiḍa* and conch, chase away and overcome them (2. 4. 3, 4. 10. 2).

[1] See Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, pp. 119, 157.
[2] See Kauśika 138. 13.
[3] See Sāyaṇa on 3. 10. 1.

### (2) Atras

These are also the demons who were born of the intestines of the Vaśā cow (10. 10. 21). The holy cow has the Atras as its stomach (9. 7. 16).

### (3) and (4) Asura and Āsurī

The words occur nearly sixty times in the AV. The word Asura is used in the AV to denote a mighty god, as an epithet of Varuṇa and Agni (4. 15. 12, 5. 11. 1, 5. 27. 1) and demons. The female of Asura is Āsurī. Āsurī is conquered in fighting for the sake of the gall of the Suparṇa, who was born first and had deposited it in the trees. Śyāmā or Āsurī plant is a remedy against leprous spots. This remedy was first made by Āsurī[1] (1. 24. 1-4). By means of *sauvarcala* plant, Āsurī attracted Indra to herself from the gods (7. 39. 2). Thus Asura women knew the magical and medicinal plants and their use. The Asuras also were adept in the knowledge of magic and medicine. They used to conceal their medicines under the ground so that the gods would not find them out. The moisture in the anthills used against flux and wound is kept secretly by them (2. 3. 3). *Pippali* was buried by them under the earth (6. 109. 3). The Asuras possessed a very lustrous elephant (3. 22. 4). They possessed *māyā* or magic. The gods took *māyā* from them and became famous (3. 9. 4). The crowned king has the name of the mighty Asura[2] (4. 8. 3). By means of the *māyā* of the Asuras one can assume different forms (6. 72. 1). In addition to the *māyā*, the Asuras possess excellent intelligence and lustre (6. 108. 3, 6. 7. 2-3). The Asuras have iron nets and practising magic they roam about with iron hooks and ropes (19. 66. 1).

The Asuras are a class of beings mentioned along with gods, men and seers (8. 9. 24). In spite of the usual rivalry between the gods and Asuras there are some common relations. The medicine for curing poison, the water in the anthills, is the daughter of the Asuras and the sister of the gods (6. 100. 3). In the battle against the Asuras, the Āṅgirasas took a very important part. The gods attacked the Asuras on the earth (12. 1. 5). Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgiras, a *deva*, made the Triṣandhi thunderbolt for destroying the Asuras (11. 10. 10). With an oblation, he made effective thunderbolt for destroying them (11. 10. 12). Indra is usually the destroyer of the Asuras (2. 27. 3). He makes them handless (6. 65. 3). Indra takes the help of different amulets for killing them. The amulets of *pāṭā*, *pratisara* and *apāmārga* were used by him in overcoming them (2. 27. 3, 4. 10. 4). The Asura attacking the embryos of the pregnant women, is black, hairy, born with tuft and snouted (8. 6. 5).

[1] See Whitney, ibid p. 24 and Bloomfield, ibid pp. 268–69. Also compare the commentary of Sāyaṇa on 1. 24. 1.

[2] See Sāyaṇa on this *ṛc*.

Thus the AV represents the Asuras as a class of beings along with the gods, men and seers. They are hostile to the gods. They are mighty and lustrous and highly intelligent creatures. Āṅgirasa Bṛhaspati devised a missile for their destruction. They possessed magic, which the gods afterwards learnt. So is the case with their knowledge of medicine. They are black and hairy and capable of changing their appearance. The part played by Āṅgirasa Bṛhaspati in destroying them is significant. The cities of the Dasyus were shattered by Aṅgiras (10. 6. 20).

### (5) Godless Men

Godless person (*adeva*) assails the sacrificer and destroys the sacrifice (6. 6. 1). The godless person plots against the pious man and also offers a sacrifice. Agni is invoked not to carry his oblations (5. 8. 3). Agni conquered the godless magic (*adevī māyā*). With his flames (8. 3. 24). The godless persons thus offered sacrifices and practised magic without invoking the gods. Thus they form an object of contempt from the men believing in gods.

### (6) Apvā

She is a female deity presiding over sin.[1] She causes colic pain in the stomach (9. 8. 9).

### (7) and (8) Paṇis and Dasyus

Occur in the same way in the AV as in the RV.

### (9) Kravyād

The word refers to either the flesh eating or funeral fire,[2] or the devils, who eat raw-flesh. The Kravyād giving out loud cries go out hunting for their prey on the new moon day (4. 36. 3). They harm the human beings by lying concealed in the drinking water during day or night (2. 29. 8-11). They kill the human beings by smelling and licking (8. 6. 6). They go in search of raw flesh (8. 3. 2). They are ordered to go to the place where the darkness goes (2. 25. 5).

### (10) Kimidins (1. 24)

These are the evil spirits, which go out in search of their prey.[3] Sāyaṇa considers them to be the thieves.[4] They are the associates of demons called Yātus. They hurl their missile against their victims. They are asked to eat their own flesh (4. 1. 24. 1-4).

### (11) Yātus, Yātudhānas and Yātudhānis

Yātu means demonic witchcraft or demons. Yātudhāna and Yātudhanī are those male and female demons, who practise demonic

[1] Cf. Sāyaṇa on 3. 2. 5. [2] See under Agni. [3] Cf. *Nirukta* 6. 11.

[4] See on 2. 24. 1. He also considers these to be those who cause pain or torture. Cf. 1. 28. 23.

witchcraft. Śarabha, Śerabhaka, Śevṛdha, Śevṛdhaka, Mokra, Anumokra, Sarpa, Anusarpa, Jurṇi, Upabda, Arjuni, and Bharūji are the names of Yātudhānas.[1] They are asked to go back to their destination. They are also asked to eat those who have sent them (2. 24. 1-8). There are demonic witchcraft-makers looking like dog, owl, eagle, vulture or *cakravāka* bird. Indra is invoked to smash them all with his bolt (5. 29. 8, 9, 23, 24). Yātus are mentioned to be the limbs of Skambha (10. 7. 18). The limbs of Skambha form their universe, which is mysterious like the Yātus. All Yātus obey the commands of Rohita (13. 4. 27).

Yātudhānas are the evil spirits or sorcerers. Agni is often invoked to chase them away (1. 7. 8). The Yātudhāna has families, children and leads householder's life. Bṛhaspati and Soma pierce them (1. 8. 3). They are deceitful (1. 28. 1). A magical plant *sadaṁpuṣpā* exposes them (4. 20. 6).

### (12) Kaṇvas

These are a class of demons. They drink blood and take away the vitality of the body. They devour the embryos. They take away the life of the beings. They are driven away to the mountain and to the place, where darkness goes (2. 25. 2-5). It is rather strange that Kaṇvas are also a respectable and pious family of sages.

### (13) Rakṣas or Rākṣasas

These demons cause trouble to the people during night time. The flames of Agni during the night or the rising of the sun in the morning disperses them (4. 52. 1, 8. 3. 24). Atharvan killed the Rakṣasas with the *ajaśṛṅgī* plant (4. 37. 1). Various amulets are used for expelling demons. The amulet of *jaṅgiḍa* (2. 4. 4), the amulet of ten trees (2. 9. 1), the amulets of conch and *apāmārga* (4. 10. 2, 4. 19. 3). kill them. They are the godless demons, who bear the heads of monstrous magnitude on their shoulders (12. 3. 43, 8. 6. 13).

### (14) Vṛtra

Agnis are present in Vṛtra, who seems to mean here a cloud (3. 21. 1). The sun as the maker of the day is born of Vṛtra (a cloud). The earth chose Indra and not Vṛtra as her lord (12. 1. 37). The word Vṛtra occurs in the AV about 90 times mostly with Indra in the 20th book.

### (15) Sadānvās

These are a class of evil spirits. They are the daughters of the evil spirits Caṇḍa or Maṅgudi. They are voracious, bold and asailing. They produce one monotonous sound. They reside in

[1] See Sāyaṇa on 2. 24. for the fanciful interpretations of these names. They may be their proper names.

cow-stalls, axles, barns of corn and the bottom of the houses, along with Sadi, a spirit of destruction and other female demonic witch-craft-makers. They are born of Dasyus and sent by heriditary diseases or men (2. 14. 1-6). According to Yāska[1] they are so called because they produce constant sound.

### (16) Grāhī

She is an evil spirit which catches persons with her four snares (19. 45. 5). She catches the joints of a person and thus causes rheumatism (2. 9. 1). When the husband of a woman dies, her house is infested with this evil spirit (12. 2. 39).

### (17) Demons attacking a pregnant woman. See under Baja.

### (18) Piśācas

These are the demons other than Yātudhanas.[2] They fly in the mid-air or sky. They consider the earth as their lord. They move invisible. A magical plant, *sadampuṣpā* makes them visible and subdued (4. 20. 6, 9). They haunt the villages and plot against the men, cattle and property. They vanish from the village as soon as the powerful Atharvan priest enters it and they plot no further (4. 36. 7-8). They erect a sort of enclosure around them. Agni shatters their enclosure and makes them visible (5. 29. 3). They devour the flesh and spirit of the person infested by them. They have eyes, heart, tongue and teeth. Agni pierces their eyes and heart, bores tongue, and destroys teeth (5. 29. 4). They have wives and children. They injure a person, while he is taking raw, cooked, or mixed food. They also penetrate him through milk, butter-milk, or the corn, obtained from the uncultivated soil. Lying in the lair of the Yātus they infest a person through his drinking water (5. 29. 6-8). The bloody Piśācas eating flesh thus harass creatures day and night. They corrupt the mind of a man (5. 29. 9-10). Thus the body and the spirit of the man gradually sinks down and he looks like one suffering from *yakṣma*, consumption. The fuel of *tarṣṭāgha* offered in the fire, makes the Piśācas leave the body of the person (5. 29. 15).

19-21. Śimidā (4. 25. 4), Keśin (11. 2. 18) and Kālakāñjas (6. 80. 2) are also among the demons mentioned in the AV.

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1 Cf. Nirukta 6. 30.

2 Cf. Sāyaṇa on 4. 20. 1.

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*N.B.*—Abbrivation of the works not referred to in the footnotes.

KAUŚIKA ... Kauśika sūtra, *JAOS* XIV.
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